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THROUGH TRACKLESS LABRADOR

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HUNTING CAMPS IN WOOD AND WILDERNESS

WITH A FOREWORD BY

F. C. SELOUS

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THROUGH TRACKLESS LABRADOR

BY

H. HESKETH PRICHARD, F.R.G.S.

AUTHOR OF

"HUNTING CAMPS IN WOOD AND WILDERNESS," "THROUGH THE HEART OF PATAGONIA," ETC.

WITH A CHAPTER ON FISHING

BY

G. M. GATHORNE-HARDY, F.R.G.S.

ILLUSTRATED WITH A FRONTISPIECE BY LADY HELEN GRAHAM,
A MAP OF THE ROUTE, AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

LONDON

WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1911

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When the Caribou come too late.

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TO MY MOTHER

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PREFACE.

The life of the Labrador is entirely predatory. It never has been anything else north of lat. 54, and unless mineral discoveries are made, never can be. Its inhabitants live by the chase. The bears, the caribou, the birds, the seals, the salmon, the trout, and the cod form the capital of the country, and the problem of existence is solved by successful destruction.

At the same time, the Labrador (by its own inhabitants and by Newfoundlanders it is always spoken of as *the* Labrador, the word peninsula being understood) is the most God-fearing land that I have ever visited. This, from Makkovik northwards, is due to the Moravian Mission; in the south to the Deep Sea Mission under the well-known Dr. Grenfell; while Mr. Stewart, of the Continental and Colonial Mission, labours among the heathen Eskimo round the shores of Ungava Bay. If this book serves no other end than to draw attention to the fine work being done year in year out on the Labrador, it will not have been written in vain. The chapter on the Moravian Mission, written from an intimate acquaintance of their life and methods, tells the story of men and women who, with none of the parade or the pose—not always unknown to missionary effort—are living lives beyond all praise.

Our little exploring trip from the Atlantic Coast to the George River over an unknown route may be taken

as simply a phase in the predatory life, since in order to accomplish it my companions and I adopted the life of nomad hunters, carrying a bare ration and living by the chase, killing caribou and sinking the carcases in the snow-fed lakes upon the great plateau so as to secure a line of retreat.

During the last few years, since my first visit in 1903, a number of books have been published dealing with the Labrador. These works have, however, treated either of the coast or of the North and South course of the George River, and I feel that, as almost from the day we left Nain to the day on which we returned to it, we were on entirely unexplored ground, this volume must introduce its readers to a new aspect of the country.

The conditions we had to face while crossing the great plateau which lies between the Atlantic and the George River were entirely unforeseen by us, and such hardships as we endured on our march with packs across this stony, mosquito-haunted desolation, were largely due to this fact.

No amount of forethought could have revealed what lay ahead of us, as even at Nain local knowledge only extended to the Fraser lake-head behind Nunaingoak Bay; and as soon as we left the Eskimo deer-hunters' route, we entered a tract of country which has probably remained untrodden by white foot or red since the beginning of things. It is a difficult matter to describe this menacing wilderness, lying 2,000 feet above sea-level, swept by arctic winds, dotted with marshes and strewn with quartzite boulders of the most ancient of all formations. I have tried with all too small a skill to bring some pictures of this abomination of desolation before the reader's eye.

It would be quite absurd, however, to judge the whole country by the conditions which prevail upon the high plateau. Recently great interest has been taken in the pulp industry of Labrador, for which a brilliant future is prophesied. In the southern half of the country and in some river valleys these forecasts may materialise; but it should be remembered that in central Labrador thousands of square miles show nothing but patches of dwarf birch, few and far between, of which the stems are no more than finger-thick, hardly substantial enough to boil a kettle.

The death, by starvation, of Leonidas Hubbard has given the interior of the Labrador a bad name which has not been removed by the fine journeys of Mr. and Mrs. Tasker, Mrs. Hubbard, Mr. Wallace and Mr. Cabot. Hubbard's objective was our own—Indian House Lake; his plan to reach it by way of Hamilton Inlet, the Nascaupee and George Rivers — a route afterwards successfully traversed by Mrs. Hubbard and by Dillon Wallace—was entirely different. As is well known, he and his party went up the Susan River, and after many disasters were forced to turn back. On the retreat, in spite of the efforts of his companions, Hubbard died of starvation. I do not think that some of the more critical of geographers yet appreciate the remorseless ill-luck that pursued Hubbard. I can only say this. Everyday that Gathorne-Hardy and I spent in battling with Labrador nature, increased our respect and admiration for Hubbard. Luck was with us as it was against him, and in wilderness travel it is a truism to say that luck decides the issue.

One of the main interests of our journey lay, I think, in the fact that we adopted as nearly as might be the

methods of the Indians. It has been said and written again and again that to travel with the speed and lightness of an Indian is beyond the powers of the white, and is a certain road to disaster. We did not find it so. Of course, had we failed to kill the final caribou we should in another day have found ourselves empty-handed in the heart of a country "where many have starved." Even then I fancy that with rod and rifle we would have won our way out without much hardship. As it was, with the venison to keep up our strength, we rivalled, if we did not actually surpass, the average speed of Indian travel. On August 30th, at eight in the morning, we left our camp on the George, and by September 10th, at four in the afternoon, we were at Nain. Of these eleven days, a whole one was spent in relay packing, and on three occasions repairs to boots and other wilderness exigencies only allowed us half-a-day's march. In addition to the ordinary work of camping and breaking camp, we *cached* our canoe against the winter on the uplands. Nor did we abandon any of our outfit on the journey, and never at any time did our packs average under 50 lbs. in weight. As we had to find our way (for the Indians' single line to the coast is well known to them) and so went many miles out of our course, I think it may fairly be inferred that white men can attain results in wilderness travel which will bear some kind of comparison with the achievements of the red.

My thanks are due to my friend and companion, Geoffrey Gathorne-Hardy for his chapter on Fishing, for the map illustrating our route, for many of the photographs, and, most of all, for the intangible daily help which comes under the head of good comradeship.

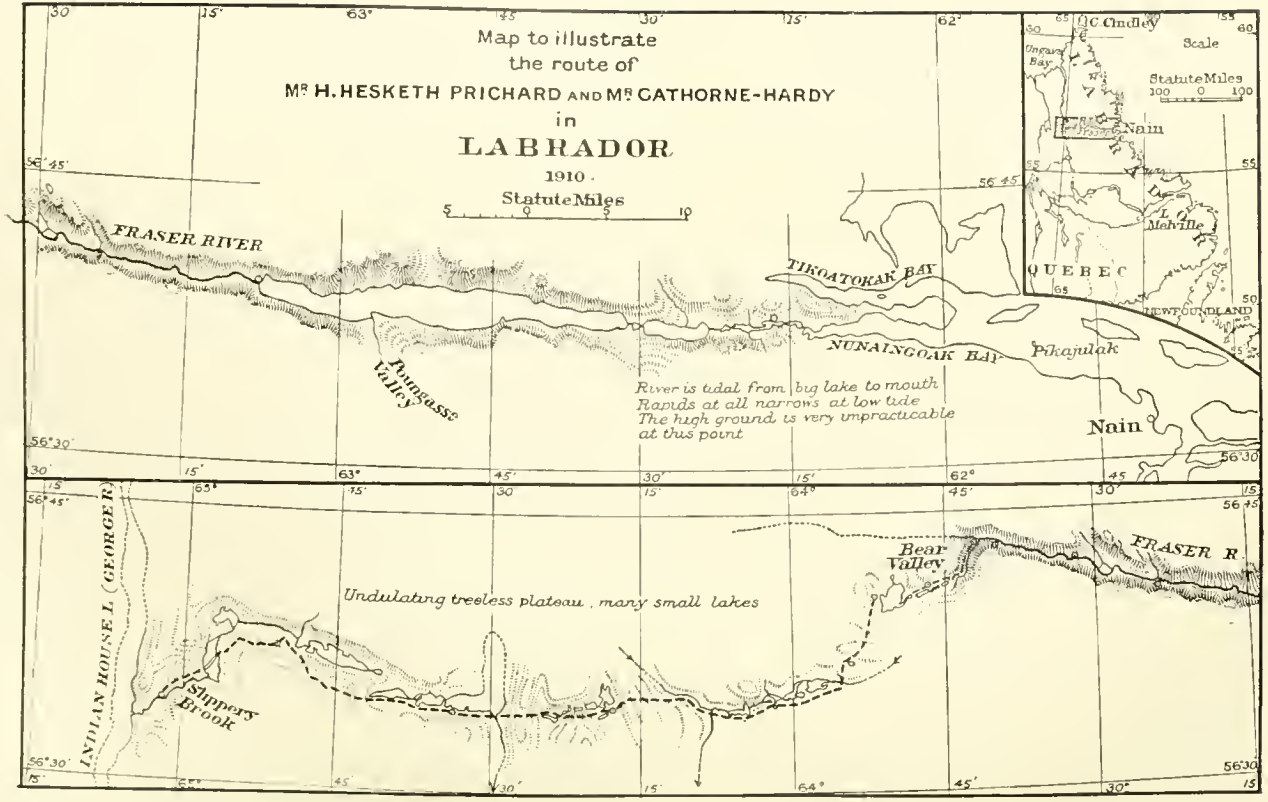
To Captain Jackson for much valuable assistance, for he spared no trouble on our behalf; I am indebted to Mr. Schmitt of the Moravian Brethren for some excellent photographs, also to the Rev. Mr. Lenz and Rev. Mr. Perrett, also to the parent Moravian Mission for kindly lending me several others, and to all whom we met for the efforts made on every occasion to forward the object of our trip.

I thank Lady Helen Graham for the spirited frontispiece she has contributed to my book. More than all, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to my mother for her interesting contribution on the inner life of the Moravian Mission and the Eskimo attached to their settlements. She spent a summer and early autumn among them at Hopedale and Nain, and, naturally, a woman's testimony upon and her viewpoint with regard to places so remote and an existence so remarkable are doubly valuable.

Lastly, I should like to point out that, although we had excellent opportunities for promiscuous nomenclature, the map of our route is not disfigured by Hardy Lake or Prichard River or Sister-in-law Emmy's Mountain. Of late years some *poseurs* have been busy 'discovering' geographical features (sometimes even in districts well known to local guides) and labelling them with their own names. The Royal Geographical Society has protested strongly against this absurd practice, and it is really time that such antics were killed with laughter.

H. HESKETH PRICHARD.

Prae Wood, St. Albans.
7th July, 1911.


Map to illustrate
the route of
Mr H. HESKETH PRICHARD AND Mr CATHORNE-HARDY
in
LABRADOR
1910.
Statute Miles
5 0 5 10
FRASER RIVER
TIKOATOKAK BAY
NUNAINGOAK BAY
Pikajulak
Nain
Kumgasse Valley
River is tidal from big lake to mouth
Rapids at all narrows at low tide
The high ground is very impracticable at this point
C Chidley
Scale
Statute Miles
100 0 100
Ungava Bay
L Melville
QUEBEC
NEWFOUNDLAND
Undulating treeless plateau, many small lakes
Bear Valley
FRASER R
INDIAN HOUSE L (GEORGE R)
Slippery Brook

CHAPTER I.

THE LABRADOR.

Legend has it that in the year 986 Bjarni Herjulfson sailed back from his voyagings to Iceland, desiring to spend Yuletide at his home. But on arrival he found that his father was absent, having taken ship for Greenland in the company of Eric the Red. Bjarni decided to follow the adventurers. He fell in with fog and ill-weather, drifted through it for many days almost in the dark, and at length ran out into clear air to see the sun shining upon an unknown and wooded land. Bjarni turned northwards and skirted the coasts; presently the low shores with their forests gave place to mountains and glaciers; then a fair wind arose and the Norse sea-king swept back across the Atlantic in safety. Such is the tradition of the discovery of Labrador. More than nine hundred years have passed since the visit of the Viking ship, and to-day the country lying just behind the coast-line remains to a large extent as unknown and unexplored as it was then.

If you take a map and draw a line due west from Glasgow, the line, after passing across two thousand miles of the Atlantic Ocean, will strike the coast of the Labrador peninsula. Carry on that line some fifty or even thirty miles inland and it will enter upon absolutely virgin country. There are few large areas less known to geographers than this, and it is a curious fact that such a tract should exist under the British flag, within a

comparatively short distance from our shores, and moreover situated actually next door to our oldest colony of Newfoundland. The great Atlantic liners would cover the distance that separates us from Labrador in a little over three days, but as a matter of fact only two vessels set sail regularly from England for that chilly region,—the *Pelican* of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the *Harmony* belonging to the Mission of the Moravian Brethren; it was by the latter that my companions and I travelled.

The differences of climate between the West of Scotland and the land which directly faces it across the sea are enormous, for while we possess the genial warmth brought from the tropics by the Gulf Stream, the Labrador is frozen for the greater part of the year owing to the influence of the mighty current that sweeps down its coasts from the Pole. It is only possible to approach the shores of the peninsula during five months of the year. She enjoys open water from July to late November, and her summer lasts no more than two brief months. Frost continues till the end of June and begins again on the inland heights during the closing days of August; thus the deer shot in November keep as in a refrigerator till the following June.

The intrinsic interests of the Labrador settle, in the first place, round its people, who almost without exception are for ever locked, with the shortest of breathing-spaces, in a death-struggle with Nature.

The main endeavour of life is the effort to secure a bare subsistence by the capture or slaughter of things on the earth "or in the waters under the earth." Thus the folk of the Labrador are entirely predatory people.

Spring.

Summer.

The settlements on the coast are few and far between and the country has always shown herself a bitter stepmother to those who entrust themselves to her keeping. These are, as I have said above, with scarcely an exception, hunters and fishers, against whom land and sea combine. The rigours of cold and hardship bear upon them without mercy. As the Emperor Caligula spoke of the sea as a tyrant, so once I heard a settler speak of the Labrador as of a woman. "Terrible hard and cruel she is." And the words brought before the mind's eye the seemingly endless leagues of that vast unmapped interior—a vista of snow, cloud, wind and cold during winter; of scorching Northern sunshine in summer, that hatches out into their malignant life myriads of flies for the torture of all things living; of rushing rock-rent rivers and of barrens rolling ever upward to the Height of Land.

Were it not that Labrador, the stepmother, is cruel to her own children, the Indians of the barren-grounds and the Eskimo of the coast, one might be tempted to believe that the white men who set foot on her shores are still pursued by her vengeance, still paying the inexorable penalty for the great crime of which the first navigators of white race were guilty. At that date the traffic in humanity had reached terrible dimensions, and one of the earliest adventurers to Labrador, the Portuguese Corte Real, decoyed aboard his vessel some threescore natives, whether Indians or of some other race is a moot-point, and sent them to Lisbon. Their arrival caused much satisfaction, for the King and his Court at once leaped to the conclusion that Corte Real had discovered a land of great resources in the north—a second Africa whence they might draw brown slaves instead of

black. But to the Court of Portugal, Labrador supplied no more slaves, for on a subsequent voyage Corte Real was lost, or rather he and his ship were never heard of again; nor did his brother, who went in quest of him, ever come back from that mist-hidden shore.

The present population of Labrador falls naturally into four divisions. The first is the permanent white community, which includes the Moravian Brethren and their families, the Hudson's Bay Company's factors, and the *liveyeres* (live heres) as the white settlers are called. These all dwell by the salt water.

The second division is made up of the men belonging to the fishing-fleets, who are summer visitors only, coming up through the ice from Newfoundland and the south in the early days of July and leaving in October. The lives of these men are hard and stern, and in them again we find the predatory record. From the day on which they put out from Newfoundland in their schooners to that on which they return, they toil savagely, catching and curing fish, living meanwhile in wooden shanties on the barren wind-swept islands or on the shores of lonely inlets. Captain Bartlett sprang from this hardy stock, and he proved the fine qualities of his training by his pioneer work with Peary.

Nor must it fail to be understood that every voyage taken to the Labrador is in a sense a stake in the huge sea-game or gamble for existence, for 95 per cent. of the schooner crews are hired for the season on the share system by the captains of the fishing stations. The same system holds good in the seal-fishery, where from master to boy, each individual aboard draws, instead of pay, a certain defined and allotted share in the profits (if any) of the venture. Some hint of the chances of

Autumn.

Winter.

this life may be gathered from a newspaper extract, dated May 3rd, 1910. Under the head "Newfoundland Fishery" comes the following:—

"The seal fishery ended last Saturday and the remainder of the fleet are returning to-day. The *Adventure*, which arrived this morning, narrowly escaped being lost with all hands in Belle-isle Straits on Friday last. The steamer *Aurora*, which was the subject of a sensational report in the Press last week, namely, that she had struck an iceberg and had sunk with the whole of the crew, has passed Cape Bonavista to-day, looking deeply laden, having probably secured a large catch of seals in Northern Labrador."

If the *Aurora* was so lucky as above reported, her captain stood to make a comfortable sum, and each of her crew their share in proportion. But the other side of the picture is dark enough. When there comes a failure in the year's fisheries of seal or cod, it means that months of labour and hardship have been spent for which no return can be found, and the *personnel* of such unlucky vessels must depend for their winter's provision upon an advance from some merchant, who looks to recoup himself from the result of the next or a future season's success. At one period it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that many of the fishermen were born, lived and died in almost hopeless debt; but the present generation has seen a great improvement in this respect.

As first come is ever first served along the Labrador coast, the schooners, in their haste to arrive early on the fishing grounds, run many risks in passing through the ice, which clings to these inhospitable shores until late into the summer, yet accidents are remarkably few.

For one reason the sealers and cod-fishers are wonderful sailors, their local knowledge has been won in small boats, so that they know the position, depth and contour of almost every reef; for another reason the coast is fortunately well provided with harbours. They are fine men, these "slaves of the sea." Yet they are but summer migrants, they never penetrate the interior or pass beyond sight of sea-water, and, after all, the chief interest of this forbidding land lies with those who remain when the days are dark and snow and ice cover land and sea alike.

With the third division we reach the real children of the coast, the Eskimo tribes. All along the eastern littoral, from Makkovik northwards, they exist, cared for and preserved by the Moravian Brethren, whose wise policy it is to encourage them to live as nearly as possible on the lines that Nature intended. The Moravians have done a great and heroic work, to which I have tried to bear witness in the latter part of this book.

The Eskimo are altogether predatory, a race of hunters and fishers. Fish in the summer, fur in the winter, and seal, walrus and white whale are their quarry from one year's end to another. In the early springtime also, while ice still holds the land iron-bound, they make long journeys by *komatik*, or dog-sledge, after the herds of Barrenground caribou, the branch of the vast reindeer family which inhabits the barren uplands of North and Central Labrador.

Now we are left with the fourth, the Indians of the interior. Their numbers were, some time ago, computed to be four thousand in all, but the large majority of these hunt and trap in the southern part of the

A Nascaupee Indian of the Barren Grounds.

peninsula, massing at various points, and coming out with their furs to the waters of the St. Lawrence. More to the north, in the central country are the lodges of two tribes, the Montagnais and the Nascaupees. Here we find the dominant instinct of Labrador, the predatory instinct, at its fullest development. These tribes owe their food, clothing and their habitations to the creatures of the chase, and they live a life of hardship and freedom such as was more common in the world of a hundred years ago.

Horses and cattle there are none on the peninsula, except at Hamilton Inlet, but all along the coast, at every Eskimo encampment and about the cabins of the *liveyeres*, are numbers of husky dogs. In winter these animals pull the sledges and form the sole means of communication between the settlements. During the summer they are in many cases not fed by their owners, but are left to seek sustenance as they can. Hence the hungry brutes range the land near the coast and add to the problems of Labrador, as they permit no creature to live that they can pull down.

Unfortunately the brief delicious summer of Labrador is rendered terrible—I use the word advisedly—by flies of many kinds; the mosquito, the black-fly, the bot-fly and others rise in countless swarms over the wilderness and harass the traveller by day and by night.

The term "barrens" must now be explained. It is the name given to the vast terraces which roll from salt water to salt water across the plateau of the interior. In some parts of the country their monotony is broken by groups of wind-torn trees which grow upon the shores of unnumbered lakes and beside the waters of shallow rivers. No portion of the King's dominions is wilder, more

inhospitable, more rugged than this land, where the wind for ever cries and the air is filled with the sound of upland waters lapping on stony shores.

It may be asked why any human being should wish to visit such a wilderness as the interior. The answer is that there a man can enjoy the true life of the open, because the land has a charm all its own; perhaps because there is a faint feeling that in some such surroundings our fore-fathers lived out their lives; there are, in fact, many reasons cogent enough, for the Labrador has many very definite attractions. Her climate is vitalising to an extraordinary degree, and the atmosphere brilliant and clear in the summer, during which there is not usually much rain and the dense fogs which trouble the coast further south do not in most seasons extend to the north.

As to the scenery of the coast, nothing can well be imagined of its grandeur and impressiveness. As the ship moves along, sometimes between the deep fringe of islands and the mainland, sometimes opening out upon the vast distances of the Atlantic, the outlook changes with every moment. Round each headland and rock some fresh grouping of mighty cliff, deep water and iceberg greets the eye. As the degrees of latitude mount, the precipices, ever rising, tower higher and higher until they reach an altitude of four thousand feet sheer from the sea, dwarfing Norwegian glories.

CHAPTER II.

LONDON TO LABRADOR.

It was in the year 1903 that I paid my first visit to the Labrador peninsula. I went with the view of seeing what sport in the way of big game shooting was to be obtained there. It must be acknowledged that, so far as my chief aim was concerned, the trip proved a failure, for I saw the tracks of only one stag and actually fired my rifle but twice, bagging only an Arctic hare and a seal. Beyond this I had a certain amount of sport with the shot-gun, chiefly ptarmigan and wild-fowl; but my main purpose in going to Labrador remained unfulfilled and the herds of barrenground caribou lived on unthinned. Yet I never regretted the long weeks spent, many of them in weary toil, during that first visit.

I had gone to the country hoping to be able to pick up on the spot some craft in which it would be possible to navigate one of the many rivers whose waters flow into the Atlantic, and thus to make my way into the unexplored interior. In this also I was disappointed. Labrador possesses no boat suitable for river use, as the people never venture beyond the bay heads, and the only craft obtainable in Jack Lane's Bay took the shape of a flat-bottomed boat, capable of carrying two men and a little baggage. I had with me Jack Wells, a Newfoundlander, who had been cook to Mr. F. C. Selous on his second expedition after caribou into central Newfoundland. Wells and I embarked in the flat and

succeeded in making a two-days' voyage up a river that flows into Jack Lane's Bay. Here we saw numerous bear tracks, and should, I think, have been successful in killing some game had it been possible for us to penetrate a little deeper into the country. But soon we found ourselves shut in by hills and forests, the water in the river grew shallower and shallower, and at last, even though one of us hauled and the other shoved, we could make no progress, and so had to beach our boat and trust to shanks' mare. In this way we covered a certain amount of country, but our way was always blocked by lakes and thick wood, until finally, in the early days of October, we were compelled to return, as the last steamer, the *Virginia Lake*—since lost in the spring seal-fishing, but which at that time used to carry the mail to the little fishing stations upon the outer islands—was already due at Hopedale, 70 or 80 miles away, on her last trip southwards before the winter. In order to catch her I had to purchase a trap-boat, and in this craft we made our way through the famous Windy Tickle in the face of contrary winds, arriving at Hopedale a few days before the arrival of the steamer, which had been delayed by bad weather on her northerly passage.

Such is in brief the story of my first experience of Labrador, which, although I obtained no such game as I had expected, I thoroughly enjoyed, more especially as it brought me into contact with the Moravian missionaries, among whom I made some fast friends, and, indeed, for the next seven years I annually received from them letters containing all the news of the coast.

On this first trip I found the report that settlers are unwilling to penetrate into the interior was founded on

fact, and I realised that if I were to return to Labrador, as I intended to do, and to get behind the rampart of forest and mountain which had turned me back, I must bring with me both craft for river use and companions from the outside world. I discovered also that beyond the *komatik* or dog-sledge journeys of fur-hunters and the yearly Eskimo quest which takes place in the spring after the caribou, hardly any effort had ever been made to journey west. Of the great wilderness which represents the interior I was able to gain no information worthy of the name. "It is a place where men starve," said settler after settler, and when I questioned them as to the possibility of penetrating into its recesses I was met with a shaking of heads and with prophecies of death and disaster.

In fact, few things have struck me more than the almost universal fear which lay upon the fisher population of this barren coast with regard to the great hinterland upon whose eastern lip they live. It was the one subject upon which their imaginations never failed them. To lose the way, to be drowned in some rock-staked torrent, to die miserably of starvation—in such glib phrases they voiced their many forebodings. And it must be acknowledged that in that year of 1903, the prophets were strengthened by the calamitous issue of the expedition of Leonidas Hubbard. The story of his gallant struggle and his death so bravely met in the valley of the Susan, are too well known to bear more than a passing word. He and his two companions, Wallace and Elson, had started with the intention of reaching Indian House Lake on the George River; they had taken with them a short allowance of food, and by a fatal mischance early in their wanderings they turned

the prow of their canoe into the wrong river, up whose turbulent waters they worked their way, portaging at times over soft marshes and through thick wood. They finally sighted from a mountain the great waters of Michikamau Lake, and were there delayed by contrary winds and storms until the snow began to fall and the approach of winter forced them to turn back and to attempt to retrace their steps. Their provisions exhausted, and sore stricken with illness and famine, they pushed on until they came within a march or two of safety, when Hubbard could go no further, and Wallace and Elson reluctantly left him to bring help. How that help arrived too late, and how both the two stronger men nearly succumbed is a story that most have read. I will only say that had I to choose among the dozen travel books of the world, I would place among them Elson's unvarnished narrative of how he and Wallace and finally he alone (Wallace having endeavoured to return to Hubbard with food) walked out through the snow to Grand Lake. This diary is included in Mrs. Hubbard's accurate and excellent work, "A Woman's Way through Unknown Labrador," which tells how three years later she carried her husband's plans to a triumphant conclusion. The book is published by Mr. John Murray and ought to be widely known.

I will not criticise Hubbard's arrangements here, indeed the best criticism of them is the expedition made by Gathorne-Hardy and myself with which this book is primarily concerned.

Luckily in 1903 I gained a certain amount of experience and knowledge which later stood us in good stead. From the day I bade good-bye to the rugged and rocky coast, I looked forward to returning and

attempting a second journey into the interior, the prospect of which had taken possession of my mind. It was seven years, however, before time, opportunity and the men came together, and during those seven years the work of other Labrador expeditions must be noted. The first was that of Mrs. Hubbard, to which I have already referred; the second, consisting of a party of six, was led by Dillon Wallace. Both these started from North-West River at the head of Hamilton Inlet and successfully reached Ungava Bay, following the course of various known and unknown rivers and ultimately arriving at the Hudson's Bay post by way of the rapids of the Lower George. William B. Cabot of Boston, who was on the coast in 1903, had meantime turned his attention to a route of his own, by which he visited the Indians in the neighbourhood of the Height of Land. His travels and explorations, carried out, I believe, alone at times, and at times with a single companion, were fine performances, the history of which it is to be hoped that he will some day publish. It would be absurd to make any reference to Labrador exploration without including the name of Dr. A. P. Low, now Deputy Minister of Mines in Canada. Dr. Low's explorations have been chiefly made in Central and Western Labrador, and his must always remain the great name connected with those regions.

Were I writing a full account of exploration in the Labrador peninsula, there are of course many other names far apart and divided by centuries of time that should find a place here, from Bjarni Herjulfson the Norseman to John McLean, from Corte Real to Dr. A. S. Packard, the American naturalist. But that is by no means my intention, I merely give a brief resumé

of the work of the last decade, and the fact remains that up to the year 1910 no attempt had been made, except by way of the Indian route before referred to, to cross the totally unexplored region lying between the Atlantic coast and the George River.

In 1903 the idea had already occurred to me that in order to reach Indian House Lake, which is a widening of the George—or, as the Indians prefer to call it, the Barren-grounds—River, it might not be necessary to approach the sources of the George from the south, the route hitherto followed by exploring parties, but that a party of men striking straight inland from the Atlantic coast might reach its objective by crossing the intervening region, of which the highest point forms the divide between the eastern and western watersheds.

My plan to reach the George differed from any other in that, if necessary, canoe travel could be practically eliminated. After advancing as deep into the country by water as fortune would permit, the idea was to *cache* our canoe and to proceed with light packs of 40 or 50 pounds per man, at a pace which would reduce the time that a more heavily equipped expedition, with its many relays, would require to perhaps a third. There was, of course, some element of chance in this plan, as full rations could not be carried, but then no company of Eskimo ever started out for the interior in the olden days without that same drawback: they went forward on their sledges over the ice until they found the deer-herds. If their provision or their dog-food became exhausted before they reached the herds, the worst happened, and the tribe by the coast waited for the hunters' return in vain. Our method was simply a translation of the old-time native spring-hunt to summer

conditions, and, of course, on a much extended scale, with this in our favour, that in summer the probability of finding sustenance on the country would not be confined to meeting with caribou, but our larder might at any time be replenished by such fish and fowl as we might kill. On the other hand, dog-travel is far faster than any pace possible to human beings, and we were likely to have to spend much longer in the interior than any party of Eskimo had ever done.

Such, then, was the plan in embryo, and it only remained to find the time and the men. Everything comes to him who waits, and the first of my two requisites fell to my lot in due course; with regard to the second good fortune aided me. I had often talked over the matter with my friends G. M. and A. C. Gathorne-Hardy, and in 1910 the former found himself able to accompany me.

Once Hardy and I had thoroughly discussed ways and means, we agreed that a good canoe man must form the third member of the party. I therefore wrote to my Canadian hunter, Ed. Atkins, and was delighted to have the following answer: "I received your letter; I will take that trip with you. How many caribou are we allowed to kill in Labrador?" This was excellent, as Atkins has very few superiors at canoe work in any country; indeed if there be such, I have yet to see them ply their art. For the rest we determined to take two canoes and to trust to picking up a fourth man in Labrador, should we eventually decide to augment our party.

Having made up our minds to try to draw a line across the blank area which on the maps represents north-eastern Labrador, between the Atlantic and the George, we

tentatively settled upon the Moravian station of Nain, which lies between 56 and 57 degrees north latitude, as the best point of departure from the coast. The next thing to be done was to arrange some scheme of travel that would ensure our reaching that place in good time for our venture during the brief Labrador summer. Communication with the peninsula is almost entirely kept up from St. John's, Newfoundland, but the Arctic current that sweeps down the coast carries immense ice-floes even as late as July, and these constitute a serious hindrance to ships coming from the south. With the purpose we had in view, however, we could not risk any delay which might lose us even a few days of the open season. Luckily an alternative route was offered to us, for by the courtesy of the Board of the Moravian Missions we were enabled to purchase passages by the Mission vessel, *Harmony*. This little ship, starting in June from London, makes her annual trip across the Atlantic, and through the floes of the Arctic current straight to the shores of Labrador. As she crosses the current instead of steaming up its length, as boats from the south are forced to do, she is usually the first arrival on the coast.

This matter arranged, we ascertained what provisions we could buy locally from the Moravian stores, and the answer to this being entirely satisfactory we had only to await the date of sailing.

So far everything had been in our favour, our canoes, tents and baggage were already prepared, when I suddenly received a cable from Atkins to say that he could not accompany us on account of illness in his family.

This was a blow, but before long a cable sent to Mr. Henry Blair, the well-known St. John's agent, produced

The *Harmony.*

The *Harmony* in the Ice.

the news that a Newfoundlander named Robert Porter was willing to take Atkins' place. I replied at once directing Porter to leave for England in order to sail with us on the *Harmony*, as from experience I knew the uncertainty of making a timely connection upon the Labrador coast. So in order to get to Labrador, a distance of only 600 or 700 miles from St. John's, Porter travelled nearly 5,000. He turned out to be 45 years of age, a good canoe man who had gained considerable experience both on the Exploits River in his native land and during various expeditions in the Yukon territory, where he had spent some years. He had also passed two winters trapping in southern Labrador, but had no knowledge of the northern part of the country. We found him to be an extremely hard-working and dependable fellow.

Our little party once more raised to its full strength, on the 22nd June we went aboard the *Harmony* in the London Docks and the same morning weighed anchor. Generally the old ship covers the 2,400 sea-miles of the North Atlantic which divide London from the shores of Labrador in about eighteen days, but we were not destined to be so fortunate on this trip, and by sundown on the eighteenth day there still remained many horizons between us and Makkovik, the first Moravian settlement for which we were bound.

Almost all the way across we carried a head wind, once making but fourteen miles in the twenty-four hours, and the average day's run throughout the first part of the voyage only amounted to some 70 or 80 miles. But the *Harmony* rolled and plunged forward perseveringly, and at last, after encountering a three-days' fog, during which nothing but the occasional

shadowy form of an iceberg broke through the narrow grey circle of sight while the little ship lurched wearily on the heavy swells till there was scarcely a bone in our bodies that did not complain, we saw a dim bare island through a rift in the mist — the first land fall of Labrador. June and July generally find even the North Atlantic in a gentle mood, but such was not our experience, though, as it was a singularly open season we saw little floe-ice in the Arctic current. Yet we were not sorry when the days spent on the bridge watching the smallest steamer that crosses the Atlantic (200 tons register) battling with seas and head-winds, were at length over.

The *Harmony* is a ship with a history. Originally as the *Lorna Doone*, a tea-clipper destined for the China trade, she was capable with a fair wind of reeling off her 300 knots' run. Later steam was put into her, and she carried the Wiggins Expedition to the White Sea, as well as some lesser venturers on a gold quest up the tropical rivers of Brazil. Next she made voyages for nitrate to Chili, then for stone to Jersey. From the latter trade she was purchased by the Moravian Brethren to carry the necessaries of life and to form the one link with home for the hardy missionaries who dwell and work in the six little stations beside the Polar current, on the shores of what Jacques Cartier described as "the land which God gave to Cain." The *Harmony's* commander, J. C. Jackson, is a magnificent sailor, and has few equals among the ice-captains of the day. The comfort and even the lives of the missionaries in the North depend each year upon his forcing his cargoes through the ice-floes with supplies and they could not depend upon a better man. Hardy and I will always

feel grateful for the kindness and courtesy which he showed us on the *Harmony*, and we both hope that our friendship with him will always continue.

But to return. We felt our way towards the mainland between half-hidden islands, the fog closing behind us as we steamed slowly on. By the afternoon the mist had lightened a little, and a flagstaff on a rock came into view, beyond it the station of Makkovik, standing, as all the Moravian missions stand, on the margin of the tide and under the shadow of sombre hills. The settlement had been enveloped in fog and rain for weeks, and the white mission house, with its pretty church and few scattered huts, seemed embedded in depths of moss and woodland, all richly green. The greenness came as a surprise after the absolutely bare islands we had hitherto seen.

A few of the Eskimo women and children raised the usual cries which herald an incoming boat, and a man fired several shots as a *feu-de-joie*. These people are much addicted to *feux-de-joie*, particularly when the *Harmony*, whose arrival at the break-up of the floes is the event of the year, steams into sight.

Makkovik is the most southerly spot where Eskimos now live, for they are being driven ever north before an increasing white population. The missionary in charge, the Rev. Mr. Townley, and his wife came off in a boat from the little wooden jetty and took us ashore. We found the whole country like a sponge, running at every pore with tinkling rivulets and streams; but one could well imagine that on a sunny day the bay is full of a soft beauty very rare indeed on the Labrador. We were not destined to see it under that aspect, for it rained all night, and at daybreak we were steaming north once again.

The weather improved and became clearer as we neared Hopedale in the evening, and were greeted with shouts and several dropping shots from round the curve of the shore where the Eskimo huts stand. The mission boat put out at once and the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Lenz came aboard. Thereafter for three days they showed us a gentle and winning hospitality which is hard to describe but delightful to enjoy.

In front of the Mission House, inside the white palisade, the garden beds were bright with hardy flowers, mostly pansies, and from the greenhouse, where roses were blooming, they cut lettuce that tasted doubly delicious after our long voyage. Later in the season lettuce matures in the open, while rhubarb grows not only sturdily but in luxuriance.

There is some wood still left about the station, and the mission gardens away up the hillside held brilliant Iceland poppies and splendid pansies. In a rockery were some delicate native ferns, and close by a healthy plant of edelweiss. The colouring of all the flowers, wild as well as cultured, is extraordinarily vivid, more especially the lilacs and blues. The Arctic primula is something to remember, with its fairy stalk carrying three tiny blossoms of an intense and exquisite mauve, while above, on the dark overhanging mountain, snow still lingered in long streaks and heavy patches.

Beyond the trees and ordered simpleness of the gardens lay two upland pools, mirroring the mountains and the wild greenery of their own shaggy banks. Below, the slope fell sharply to a bay where a grampus was rolling its huge body under the bluffs of a frowning island. The incoming tide was icy cold but wonderfully clear, the stones and weeds at the bottom showing

The Hunter's Grave.

The Break-up of the Ice at Nain.

sharp-cut; and here the water had a deep amber translucency underlying its ripples that I have never seen elsewhere.

While the ship lay at Hopedale, Capt. Jackson showed us the way to some lakes where, after a first day of small success, on the second we hit off the evening rise and secured seventeen trout, the larger sized of which reached nearly a pound in weight.

There were two sturdy American fishermen waiting at Hopedale for a chance to go south, who, a couple of weeks earlier, had passed through a perilous experience. They had formed part of the crew of a schooner out for cod-fishing, off the coast. One day they had left the boat in a dory to visit the end of the net. There was a good deal of floe-ice and fog about, and somehow they lost sight of their schooner and could not find her again. Night came on and bad weather, and for three days and nights they tossed about in the dory under stress of wind and storm. The elder of the two, who knew his bearings well, managed to keep some idea of direction, and one morning they finally sighted and were obliged to land upon a small island. A large majority of these islands are not only barren and uninhabited, but are practically never visited by either fishermen or Eskimo, as they produce nothing and nothing is to be gained from them. On such, starvation and death must have been the fate of the Americans, but by good luck they went ashore on an island occasionally visited by Eskimo, and the very day they landed a party chanced to put in and took off the men. The younger of the two was driven nearly mad by the terror he had undergone, but the elder appeared to take the matter more stoically. He had curiously enough passed

through a somewhat similar experience two years previously.

On the last night at Hopedale we went aboard the *Harmony* under a display of Northern Lights, which streamed out one moment in misty white rays from horizon to zenith and presently changed to rolling clouds of intenser brightness, while a white ribbon like a wind-blown torch-flame took on a lovely rose-and-rainbow edging.

We noticed that the watch had begun to wear veils to protect them from the mosquitoes.

Early the next morning the *Harmony* left for Nain, which meant a day's run of some ninety-five miles through narrow fiord-like reaches of sea between the long stretch of uncounted islands and the mainland. At times black headlands and steep indrawing cliffs seemed to block the way ahead in a hopeless confusion, but as we approached they would open again into a further channel. Wherever we came to a larger expanse of water, where the rocks flung out in a wide loop eastwards, mirages hung upon the horizon: icebergs in blue water with their own reflection reversed above them; steep cliffs that towered thousands of feet and extended for miles would dwindle and shrink as we drew nearer, some to a mere sea-washed line of reefs. Many of them would in a few minutes alternately expand and contract like the folds of a gigantic accordion.

The greater part of the coast line and the islands struck us as being curiously bare and bald, ice-worn, round-headed masses of rock without a sign of vegetation. Occasionally a shelving hollow would hold its fill of dwarf spruce and willow, and now and then an incurving mountain flank show a patch of deep green velvet lichen,

The Arrival of the *Harmony*.

Eskimo *Kayaks* in Nain Bay.

but all without exception were bare of seaweed. There the cliffs do not stand "weed-mocassined in the sea," for the Polar current with its burden of ice has scoured them bone-bare, and almost to the colour of bone. At the same time we saw in the water quantities of kelp floating by and immense flags of ribbon weed, which had been torn from northern sea-gardens by passing bergs.

All day the mainland glowered beetling and sombre to the west. Geologists say that these mighty crags and mountain chains have stood much as they now stand from the remotest antiquity. Their black slopes and summits are formed of the Basement Complex, the bed-rock of the world. The realisation of what this conveys is beyond the grasp of thought, only some faint shadow can cross the imagination of age-long winds and tempests, of vast glaciers crushing through these bleak valleys to the sea, of blackness and of unnumbered blind whirling nights of snow.

The only signs of man's presence on the shore came to us in a glimpse of Fanny's Harbour, which is the most northerly fishing station on the coast; and seawards a little string of fishing smacks, until, as daylight began to fail and we were steaming between precipices seven or eight hundred feet in height, we passed a trapboat overladen with Eskimo, men, women, children, dogs and bundles with a *kayak* tied across the bows. They howled for joy at sight of the *Harmony*, and fired no fewer than fifty-six cartridges in honour of her arrival.

It had been a long glorious summer day with hardly a ripple upon the water, but our pleasure was rather marred by the advent of mosquitoes, which came aboard from every bluff we neared and grew more numerous as

the hours wore on. We had not thought of taking any measures to defend ourselves and paid heavily for our negligence.

Suddenly round a sharp corner we turned into Nain Bay, which is shut in on three sides by heavy mountains, while at its mouth, "where tumbled islands barrier the sea," thirty miles of rock, island and curving channel hold it safe from the outer surges of the Atlantic.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE EVE OF INLAND.

THE arrival of the *Harmony* was, as usual, the signal for a fusillade of welcome from the guns of the Eskimos, and before our anchor was fast a number of boats were being sculled excitedly towards the ship. The sun had gone down and the mosquitoes were every moment reinforced from the land, where, in the neighbourhood of the crowded Eskimo huts, they always exist in their thousands. The first boat to come alongside was that belonging to the mission station, and in it were Bishop Martin, Brother Kristian Schmitt, and Mrs. Perrett. From them we learned to our great regret that my friend Brother Perrett was not at Nain, as a short time previously he had hurt his hand severely and had gone up the coast to Okak (where the Moravians have a hospital) in order that he might receive the necessary surgical attendance.

This news was a great disappointment to us, as we had counted upon Perrett's assistance in finally deciding upon our route and in questioning the Eskimo as to the direction they follow on the spring deer-hunt which they undertake annually. But Bishop Martin and Mr. Schmitt expressed their willingness to aid us in every way in their power, and just as night was falling we sculled ashore and were soon enjoying the luxury of a sleep in a chamber where the mosquito plague was limited to the few which we had brought with us upon our clothing.

The next morning we were early astir and went out into the splendid northern air. The sun was hardly up, and all Nain Bay lay stretched out before us, with the good ship *Harmony* looking quite imposing among the cluster of fishing smacks and trap-boats which surrounded her. As soon as we put in an appearance, the huts in the Eskimo quarter gave up their inhabitants, for although Nain is the capital of Northern and Central Labrador it is a metropolis which even so small an event as the arrival of two white strangers can stir to its very depths. Soon we had a crowd of natives round us, and, as it had leaked out on the previous night that we had come to Nain with the intention of attempting to journey over the barrens into the interior, we were stared at with the greatest diligence and solemnity. And indeed, if we were objects of interest to the citizens of the settlement, they were no less so to us. Many of them were pure Eskimo, squat, broad, and powerful. They were, of course, in their summer dress of light cotton *sillapaks* with the hoods turned back. They wore cloth trousers and sealskin boots tied below the knee, and without exception sported mosquito veils of brown or blue netting or cotton handkerchiefs pinned to their peaked yachtsmen's caps. The dark wind-blackened faces seen against these veils lent a curious effect to the scene by the unstirred blue waters of the bay—a hint of something Southern, entirely out of keeping with the bleak northern hills beside the Polar current.

The Labrador day commences early, and soon we were summoned into the mission house for breakfast, after which Mr. Schmitt very kindly placed himself at our disposal. He has spent a number of years on the

A Curious Iceberg.

Okak.

Labrador, and has for some time past been in charge of the trade of the Mission over the whole coast.

We began by explaining to him our scheme for reaching the George river; and perhaps before going further it will be well if I deal a little more fully than I have yet had occasion to do with the object of our journey.

The George, as those interested in Labrador travel are aware, is the main river of the eastern half of the peninsula. Having its source in the neighbourhood of Lake Michikamau, it keeps for the greater part of its length a course high up near the summit of the Labrador plateau, until from the Bridgman Mountains at the northern end of Indian House Lake (as a widening of the river is called) it descends in a continuous succession of rapids and even falls to its outlet at Ungava. The river is roughly 300 miles in length and flows parallel to the eastern coast of the Labrador.

The shores of the George river in the neighbourhood of Indian House Lake are the main camping-ground of the Nascaupee Indians, while further south the Montagnais have their lodges. Both these tribes of Indians live, as I have already said, on the caribou which they kill as the animals pass in enormous herds on their spring and autumn migrations. The presence of the Indians and the vast herds of deer have not unnaturally attracted the attention of travellers to the George river, and its course, wholly or in part, has from time to time been followed by various expeditions. The first of these, that of Maclean and Erlandson, in the early part of the last century, discovered Indian House Lake—then called Lake Erlandson—and founded a Hudson's Bay Com-

pany's post in its vicinity. But no long time passed before this was abandoned, and for many a year, until the journeys of Mrs. Hubbard and Mr. Dillon Wallace, who succeeded in reaching it by a route from Hamilton Inlet, the lake remained unvisited. Thanks to their efforts, the course of the George was both explored and mapped; but between it and the Atlantic coast lay the large blank area representing the north-eastern region of Labrador.

These vast spaces, containing an area of many thousand square miles, lie within 2,000 miles of Britain, and it seemed to us a pity that such a *terra incognita* should continue to exist under the British flag. The object of our journey then was to cross this unknown country from the Atlantic sea-board to the shores of the George river.

Our way must, we knew, lead us over the great eastern plateau of Labrador, the crossing of which would be an event of geographical interest. There were other inducements also, such as the hope of seeing the mighty herds of caribou and their attendant wolves, as well as the prospect of learning something of the northerly range of the black bear.

Before leaving England a study of the map had revealed to us tentative indications of a river named the Fraser, which discharged into the head of a bay some miles north of Nain. The fact, however, that on the same map was depicted a certain "Barrengrounds River," which has been proved not to exist, rather made us doubt the knowledge of the cartographer, and we were consequently delighted when Mr. Schmitt informed us that there certainly was a Fraser river, though it as certainly did not discharge into Tikoatokak, as the map stated, but into Nunaingoak Bay.

Bishop Martin.

Brother Schmitt.

Our plan of travel had, at any rate, the advantage of simplicity. We intended to proceed up the Fraser river as far as it might prove navigable for canoes, and then, when that point was reached, to continue our advance on foot, carrying food and blankets upon our backs. In a journey, the mileage of which is not very great, even amateurs, who have some experience of the packing-strap, can carry necessaries of life sufficient to cover a long period, and rations can be cut to very attenuated dimensions without a very serious falling off in the extent of ground traversed. On the other hand, in working with canoes and full supplies it has to be remembered that every *portage* means at least a trebling of the actual distance advanced, and even where the water is practicable—though it means the advantage that full supplies can be carried—yet the rate of progress must fail in any way to compare with that of a party of pedestrians loaded with a supply of necessaries adequate, or as nearly adequate as is possible, to the journey contemplated. We proposed therefore, having the whole Labrador summer before us, to proceed up the Fraser or any other convenient waterway which might assist us further west, to lighten our loads as we journeyed on by making *caches* at suitable intervals against our return, and having arrived within reasonable striking distance of our objective to provide ourselves each with a pack which could be dealt with in a single journey, and continue our way on foot. If unable to supplement our rations with game or fish (and no one knew anything of the conditions obtaining upon the high plateau which we must cross) the scheme might end in a more or less serious shortage of food towards the end; but if the worst came to the worst we should

at least have a *cache* of food to fall back upon at a distance, the covering of which should present no insuperable difficulty even to insufficiently nourished men, especially as *ex hypothesi* the party would in such a case be moving exceedingly light, with nothing save a rifle and a blanket to carry.

At the same time it was incumbent upon us to remember—and critics before our start did not permit us to forget—that the only other party which had trusted to a light stock of provisions had met with disaster, its leader dying and the others only escaping by the narrowest of margins; but in that case, the party having no intention of retracing their footsteps, left no *caches* worthy of the name.

Such then was our plan, and only upon two points did we need information. The first was as to how far the Fraser might be navigable to canoes; the second as to the route followed by the Eskimo on the dog-sledging expeditions which they make after caribou over the snow.

On the first point Mr. Schmitt was able to supply us with valuable details. The Fraser river, called probably after one of the two captains of that name who in the past have commanded the Moravian supply boat from England, flowed into Nunaingoak, a bay which would take us some twenty miles west of Nain. The lower part of the Fraser river, though obstructed in places by rapids impassable at low tide, might at high water be traversed in a small sailing-boat, known locally as a trap-boat. After a few miles, Mr. Schmitt added, we should come to a considerable lake-expansion—some 25 miles long—and at the head of this we should have to anchor our skiff and take to canoes, if the water were practicable

for them. Beyond this we could at first learn nothing. The Eskimo hunting expeditions do not go as far as the end of this lake, but pass over its frozen surface to a point called Poungassé, situated upon its southern side, whence by way of a steep valley they attain the plateau, having in one place to haul their *komatiks* up the rocks with ropes. The Eskimo, moreover, have no knowledge of canoe work, and their *kayaks* of seal or walrus skin, with their double-ended paddles, are wholly unadapted to river travel.

In the afternoon Mr. Schmitt very kindly questioned all the Eskimos who had any knowledge of the first stages of our proposed route. One of these men, by reason of his clearness and accuracy (a rare virtue in an Eskimo, who is usually readily confused), stood far ahead of his fellows. His name was Filipus Hunter, and he had for some years used a trouting camp at the head of Nunaingoak. From this place he had gone further west than any of his compatriots, passed by Poungassé to the end of the 25-mile-long lake where he told us a swift and shallow river (the Fraser) rolled out of a gorge. This gorge was very high and abrupt. Filipus, sitting on the floor over a map, made this clear with a great deal of gesticulation, and he further showed that as one travelled west the rocky walls rose ever higher while the river split into a dozen channels. Questioned as to whether it would be possible to climb out of the gorge of the Fraser, Filipus replied that one could certainly do so to the north, but on that side the plateau was so rough and so intersected with ravines that an advance across it in a westerly direction would be impossible for loaded men. To the south, however, the tableland was,

as far as he knew, more level, but it was open to doubt whether we should be able to scale the cliffs. As to an advance along the Fraser valley, he said that was out of the question, as after a time the valley became choked with trees and boulders. Finally he gave it as his opinion that should we fail to find a path up the cliffs we could return to Poungassé and there climb on to the high ground. He further promised to draw us a map, illustrating his knowledge. We then gave him a pipe and a tin of tobacco, with which he departed in great delight to his cartographical efforts.

As we were now certain from the information of Filipus that we could use our canoes for a little distance at any rate, we decided to augment our party, and applied to the missionaries to see if they could obtain for us the services of a reliable Eskimo. There appeared to be no trouble in finding such an individual, and we engaged one, Boaz Obed, a pure-bred native from the north. This man was chosen because he had been a member of the Eskimo hunting-party which in the previous spring had made a long dog-sledge journey into the interior after deer, and though the course they followed lay far to the south of that which we proposed taking, we thought his knowledge might prove useful.

These Eskimo hunting trips are, as I have said, made in spring with the view of killing deer at a season when the cold will preserve the meat for an indefinite time, and when it is possible to haul out the carcases with ease over the hard snow. The Eskimo hunters never go beyond a certain distance, as their limit is always the limit of half the quantity of dog food that they can carry with them. Long experience of hardships (and no doubt, also, the protected life in the mission stations)

has weaned the squat men from their ancient deadly practice of expending the last of their provisions and their strength in the attempt to find the caribou. If that attempt failed the hunters left their bones in the wilderness. Now, however, they carry dog food for a certain number of days—half of this food is consumed on the way outwards, and half on the way home again.

As the Eskimo dog can travel great distances day after day, even over the worst ground, fair journeys are accomplished. In winter a traverse of the country, which then lies under many feet of snow, is with the help of the husky teams not a very difficult matter, but it is of little geographical value. Indeed, winter is, and always must be, the season of movement on the Labrador peninsula. On the other hand, winter travel can have but small results in determining the features of the country, when valleys, lakes, rivers, and hills are practically obliterated under the deep covering of snow, and the whole landscape lies in a white trance. During the summer the difficulties of locomotion are increased tenfold, but the eye can then trace the true nature of the ground.

Having now completed our party and decided upon our route, we turned to the question of provisions, and laid in the following stock, calculated as rations for four men for 120 days. Flour and hard bread, 310 lbs.; bacon, 85 lbs.; lard, 5 lbs.; pork, 5 lbs.; dried onions, 7 lbs.; raisins, 20 lbs.; sugar, 12 lbs.; salt, 7 lbs.; baking powder, 4 lbs.; tea, 7 lbs.; chocolate food, 5 lbs.; and also 70 ozs. McDoddie viands, 24 Lazenby soup squares, a bottle of saxine, and three of brandy. We were, of course, aware that once at the end of navigable water only a small proportion of these stores

could be taken further, but it is an excellent rule to carry a quantity of provisions to the furthest possible point, so that in case of accident or delay a party may have ample to fall back upon. We also fixed our start for the morning of the next day but one—the 23rd of July; the slight delay being necessary, as immediately on arrival we had set the Eskimos to work upon footgear and gloves of skin, and these could not be ready in time for the next day's tide.

On the afternoon of the 22nd we had just returned from a walk upon the hills when Mr. Schmitt came to us and informed us that our new henchman, Boaz Obed, wished him to tell us that, in the opinion of the majority of the Nain Eskimo, we were making a great mistake in attempting to reach the George by way of the Fraser. All who knew the bay-head and the lake, save Filipus, were agreed that we would find it impossible to climb out of the valley, and that even were we to do so we should in all probability starve long before we reached the George, as the country there, which they had seen from distant hills, was exceedingly barren. They strongly advised us to sail south and take the route by which the Naseaupee Indians reach the coast, where we should be likely to find game. But Hardy and I refused to change our plans, for three good reasons. This trail was already known to the Indians, and also there was a report that Mr. William B. Cabot had in the previous year expressed an intention of again visiting the Indians by that route, and we felt it would hardly be playing the game were we to take advantage of our early arrival on the coast and to precede him along it. As a matter of fact, Mr. Cabot, accompanied by Professor McMillan and two others, did, in 1910,

Capt. J. C. Jackson

Filipus.

penetrate, by the Indian trail, to the waters of the George. And thirdly the Fraser was utterly unknown even by hearsay, and two days up its stream would take us into country which even the Indians and Eskimo had never trodden.

Boaz Obed received our decision with resigned regret, if no more. Filipus, on the other hand, came with his map, which proved in the event both useful and correct, and seemed very gratified that we had remained firm. He quite obviously looked upon our decision in the light of a vote of confidence in himself and his map, and he told us that both he and his family would industriously hope for our success.

I wish now we had asked Filipus to go with us, but at the time we thought that he was too old for so hard a journey.

CHAPTER IV.

NUNAINGOAK BAY AND FRASER RIVER.

On the next morning we left Nain a little before eight o'eloek in the morning. The entire population had gathered on the wooden wharf to see us off. The Eskimos still held strongly to their opinion that the only possible route lay by way of Frank's Brook and along the Indian trail. They reiterated their prophecies that we should fail miserably, and be forced to return and sail south to follow the Frank's Brook route after all. One of them indeed gave us his opinion with great lucidity. "You will go," said he, "to the head of the Bay and across the first big lake, then perhaps a little way up the river, but soon, when the river breaks into many streams flowing between great rocks, you will turn back. You cannot pack up that valley, for it is steep and choked with alder scrub, and the trees grow too thickly among great stones. No! you will never reach the George that way."

With these joyous predictions in our ears we pushed off in the trap-boat. A light wind was blowing from the east, which made it necessary to use the huge sweeps at starting, but which later, if it held, would give us a fair breeze up Nunaingoak Bay. For a long time until we rounded the point, the Eskimos remained watching us, and as we turned north one or two waved their hands to us. I think they believed we had already earned failure.

Deserted Tepees.

The Morning of the Start.

After a few miles we rounded a small rock, shaped like a loaf, and known as Pikajulak and obtained our first sight of Nunaingoak Bay. Nunaingoak Bay, we were informed, means no end or endless, and the name is certainly an appropriate one. Owing to the straightness with which both the bay and the river valley beyond it follow an almost due westerly course, there are no hills visible in the background of the notch cut by the river, and for a long way the water horizon is unbroken in the direction of the fiord head. On the south side there is little to be seen but grey precipitous bluffs of bare stone, characteristically rounded by glacial action; on the north, where a promontory separates Nunaingoak from the northern fiord, the slopes are gentle and more inviting, and the hollows are clothed with spruce and larch of no great size, but in some abundance. At one point on this side, where a wide bay runs in from the main fiord, the hills cease altogether, and there is a narrow neck over which a canoe may readily be portaged into Tikoatokak Bay, as indeed was actually done by Gathorne-Hardy later in the year.

For a mile or more from the head of Nunaingoak, except for a narrow channel, the water is very shallow, and the bottom showed covered with round boulders. Following the advice which had been given us, we navigated this part at high tide, and the rocks, which were just awash, made progress difficult. In this we were wrong, as at low tide the rocks are visible and mark the tortuous channel as if it were buoyed, greatly lessening the chances of shipwreck. All day we carried a light easterly wind, and, though the two canoes towed badly, we made fair progress in the lilac-coloured skiff which had been lent us by the Moravian missionaries.

Flocks of eider and black guillemots flew past us, and at one time a single seal appeared that Boaz said was Oksuk—the grey seal (*halichœrus gryphus*); this seal was very wild, and though we tried to come within shot of it, we were unable to do so. All day we sailed on up the Bay, and late in the evening reached the mouth of the Fraser River; here, on a low point, silhouetted against the western sky, we found an Eskimo fishing camp. As we approached, the stumpy figures of the Eskimo fisherman and his family appeared, and, clambering into their leaky boat, they piloted us through the narrow channel which forms the outlet of the Fraser River, and incidentally bumped us on a rock in doing so. This channel is impassable at low tide. Leaving the Eskimo trout fishers waving their goodwill behind us, we passed into the first lake-like expansion of the lower Fraser, and after proceeding a little over a mile up the river and through another tidal rapid we pitched our first camp amongst some stunted bushes on the bank. During the day we had been accompanied by that curse of the Labrador summer, the hosts of the Arctic mosquito. On the voyage copious applications of Stockholm tar and oil had enabled us to repel them, but now our veils, our long gloves and tarry faces, proved but ineffectual defences to their strenuous and unceasing onslaught. It goes without saying that any part of the skin which was left uncovered for a moment had to be liberally and instantaneously anointed with Stockholm tar, but in addition to this, whenever our thick tweed clothing was drawn tight on arms or legs, the hordes were able to insert their stings.

All day long the mosquitoes had made life brisk for us as we toiled at the oars, but on our landing they

At the Head of the Long Lake.

The First Lunch.

redoubled their attentions. More in hope of escaping them by movement than allured by the chances of getting any game so near an Eskimo camp, I took my shot-gun and wandered off into the woods.

The valley bottom, which was here not so narrow as it subsequently became, was clothed with small spruce and larch, there was also a good deal of willow, especially in the marshy parts, but not any birch. On the north side the hills, of no great height, were everywhere accessible, the slopes and summits carpeted with berry plants. As I walked along by the edge of the water I saw in the soft sand tracks of both bear and caribou, but none of these signs was less than a fortnight old. Just as it was growing dark I flushed and killed a willow grouse, which was immediately plucked and placed in the soup for the evening meal.

The next day was Sunday, and having had but little sleep during the previous night we tried to put in a doze during the morning, but with scanty success, as every moment the burning sun hatched out fresh thousands of mosquitoes into life, until at length the plague became so intolerable in camp that we walked up on to the hills, and having lighted a fire sat in its smoke; but the mosquitoes seemed to object to its pungency much less than we, and it is a fact worthy of note, that this rough remedy, so efficacious in Canada and Newfoundland, appears to have little power over the swarms of Labrador.

On Monday morning, after hauling our boat through a succession of narrows, we reached the big Lake of which we had been told. Our first view of it was intensely typical of Labrador beauty. The mountain tops which surrounded it on every side were not clear of

mist, and the waters shaded to a dark and peaty blue before the sun rising over the hills turned them to turquoise. Up the lake we sailed all day before an ever-increasing breeze, which sometimes drove us along at splendid speed. We were extremely lucky to get two days of easterly wind at this time of the year, when sometimes it blows from the north-west for weeks together; had it done so we must have rowed every yard in the face of a heavy sea. As the day advanced the height of the hills on either side of us grew loftier. The character of the cliffs changed also, most of them showing a rusty colour, as if stained with iron, and though on both sides huge bluffs came down at frequent intervals sheer to the water's edge, we noticed that here, as lower down the valley, the more accessible openings lay to the north rather than to the south.

Throughout the day, in spite of the wind and the fact that we were out upon the water, the mosquitoes continued with us. When it blew hard they alighted on the lee side of the sail, and the moment the wind lulled got to their work. With them came numbers of deer flies, insects about half an inch long, which are said to make themselves felt when they bite, but they seemed too sluggish to trouble us. All day long we carried our unwelcome passengers, which again found some splendid opportunities of torturing us; as, for instance, when we were "tracking" the skiff through the fast tidal narrows at the head of the lake.

Late in the afternoon the Eskimo Boaz pointed out three spots of special interest. The first was a dark ridge on the northern cliff to which a sinister history was attached. A party of Eskimo, returning successful from the deer-hunt, had mistaken this opening for

Boaz is interested.

"Tracking."

another pass, through which alone the lower ground may be gained. In the misty darkness of the evening they drove over it, and men and dogs were dashed to pieces on the ice and rocks beneath. The second place of interest was a high mountain, down the precipitous flanks of which a great herd of deer had wandered one winter and, unable to climb the slippery surface again, had been butchered by the Eskimo on the sea-ice beneath. The third was Poungassé itself, a low gap in the southern cliffs, up which the Eskimo haul their *komatiks* when on the spring deer-hunt, and thus attain the great central plateau.

But long before we came to Poungassé we had seen the low black line of trees which marked the western end of the lake. As we approached vast stretches of sand came into view, and as some of this had silted up into a bar we had great difficulty in getting the skiff to her moorings. At last, however, by wading and poling we forced her to the main channel of the river, and having anchored her from both bow and stern, we landed on the wide sandy beaches strewn with driftwood, which at this point form the banks of the upper waters of the Fraser. Among the driftwood we observed the first signs of birch trees, which, however, we were not destined to find growing till we were a day or two higher up the stream. Larch was scarcer here, and among the spruce were noticeable a certain number of small balsam firs; but these last disappeared again higher up. Imprinted on the sand we saw numerous fox tracks of all sizes and dates, but nothing more interesting; nor did any success attend Gathorne-Hardy's efforts with the rod, though later in the year we had magnificent sport with sea trout at this very spot.

I left the others preparing the canoes for the morrow, and walked up the north bank of the Fraser. The valley of the river at this point is wide, but the waters come down with some velocity. On the great virgin beaches, the comings and goings of all wild creatures for the past few weeks could be read. Here, a week ago, a fox had stalked some bird, and further on a bear with cubs had come down to the water's edge. Later, leaving the banks, I climbed some high ground and saw that the river valley stretched away almost due west, the cliffs still growing higher and higher, while the low ground was densely wooded with spruce and juniper and what we later discovered to be alder, some of the trunks of which were as thick as a man's leg. Indeed, so dense was the undergrowth that I was reminded of the Eskimo pessimist, "You cannot pack up that valley, for the trees grow too thickly among great stones." Were we travelling to an impasse? Well, as to that time alone could show.

Next morning we awoke to find the rain falling, both cold and heavy, but we got off in fair time. Porter, who is an expert, and Hardy, went in one canoe; Boaz Obed the Eskimo and myself in the other. As Boaz had never been in a canoe before, and I—though I have travelled a good deal in these craft—cannot pretend to any skill, it seemed likely that the pair of us might have an exciting time. This turned out to be the case, and we were more than once on the verge of upsetting, especially after the first few reaches, for the river then grew shallower and more rapid, running down over one steep incline after another, and sometimes in several separate streams. But his long practice in *kayaks* stood Boaz in good stead, though at first he was loth to

A Nasty Place.

The Cliffs of the Fraser.

exchange the paddle for the pole until he found that the former was of little value in the fast converging currents which we had to negotiate time and again. After a particularly heavy bit of work we stopped for lunch, and while it was preparing Hardy and I each shot a squirrel, which was the only sign of game that we had seen all day. Though the squirrel is a small animal, we found that a couple added to the soup made a desirable change from the bacon, which was our only alternative. After lunch it rained harder than ever, and, truth to say, no upset could have made us much wetter than we were, for the rain beat strongly down, both morning and afternoon, and the wading was often deep and the stones slippery. The mosquitoes also were with us, and revelled in the fact that for such quick-water work we could not wear our veils. The tar mixture was useless, since it washed off in the rain and ran down into our eyes, temporarily blinding us. That evening Boaz, to our surprise, produced and dined off some dried white whale meat; after which he took a copious draught of seal oil from a bladder. This provision he had brought with him; and thereby hangs a tale to come clear presently.

The next morning, the 26th, the rain, which had continued all night, still beat down wearily; nor did it cease all day. Once again we had very difficult water to contend with, and there were but few reaches where we were not forced to wade and shove the canoe up-stream. Speaking generally, I may say that the whole of the upper Fraser is rapid, and though not actually a very difficult river, it is at all times a nasty one for canoes, as the currents and the slippery stones make the keeping of one's feet a continual effort. After about

ten miles the river began to show an increased tendency to split up into a number of very shallow streams, flowing over a shifting bed of coarse shingle and treacherous boulders. The banks for the most part were clothed with spruce on a carpet of white reindeer moss, which began to be interlaced everywhere with bear paths, the unmistakable signs of these animals being very numerous, while on every mudbank their curiously human footprints were impressed. Of other life we saw but little, always excepting the squirrels, which we hunted eagerly for the pot. The ubiquitous whiskey-jack, or Canada jay, appeared as usual, as did also an occasional ermine or weasel. Fishing, on the whole, was a failure; the sea trout were not yet up, and except at one place, where Hardy caught a few small trout, and in returning from which he had the great misfortune to lose the reel of our smaller and more useful rod, our efforts, though unflagging, proved practically fruitless.

On the third day, when quite fifteen miles up the river, the leading canoe with Porter and Hardy suddenly came in sight of a seal. It was the Labrador bay or harbour seal, an animal identical with our British common seal *(Phoca vitulina)*. Hardy, thinking of the treat in store for Boaz, could he succeed in slaying the seal, did his best to stalk it; but the animal, which had come up from the sea, had evidently had experience of the Eskimo and their *kayaks*, and, diving under the canoes, disappeared down-stream.

For five days the rain never ceased, but this, whilst it made things uncomfortable, was probably a blessing in disguise, as it filled up the river, and so enabled us to pass over shallows, which at ordinary times would have presented insurmountable difficulties.

The Valley of the Fraser.

Where the Fraser begins to grow shallow.

By July the 30th we were well up the river, which, however, was growing continuously more rapid and shallow, indeed, a mile a day was all the progress we could make, though Boaz and I had improved considerably in our canoe work, and now faced water which at the beginning would have driven us to unload. On this day Hardy and Porter had what might have been a nasty accident. They were working up an extremely fierce channel, when Porter's iron shod pole of maple, from Prae Wood in Hertfordshire, slipped upon the rocks, causing him to fall headlong out of the canoe. The cargo was fortunately well fixed in, and covered with a large waterproof tent sheet, so, as the water was not deep, the two men were able to slip their hands underneath and, holding the cargo inside, to right the canoe, and so to save its whole contents.

All this time, though we had seen two or three rifts leading up to the plateau, on the north side of the river, on the south the line of cliffs had remained practically unbroken. They were now on both sides, fully 1,500 feet in height, and we began to wonder whether we should ever find a practicable ascent. Once we climbed a valley on the north side full of huge fragments which had fallen from the cliffs, but at its head were confronted by a precipice. This part of the valley of the Fraser remained, during most of the hours of the day, both dark and gloomy. The sun was shining many an hour upon the plateau before its rays pierced to the bottom of the deep chasm up which we were journeying, and early in the afternoon it sank behind the opposite cliff which threw a huge black shadow right across the river. From time to time vast masses of rock came thundering down the flanks of the mountain, sometimes

with so resonant a sound as to wake us. We were always careful to camp well in the middle of the valley, as it would have been a daunting experience to face even for a single night the possibility of being crushed to death, for there are few men whose imaginations are so much under control that they could sleep peacefully within the zone of an unnecessary danger.

On the 31st, while we were lunching among some birch trees in the pouring rain, Boaz came to me, and the following conversation took place :—

"Me want more monee."

I replied I did not understand that, as he had agreed to come with us for $1.50 a day.

"Much work, little monee. Cut wood, much work, little monee. You give me more monee?"

"Certainly not; go away."

"Plenty fish, Nain," said Boaz.

This was, of course, a threat, meaning that, if I did not accede to his demand, he was thinking of returning to Nain to take part in the cod-fishing. I then told him very distinctly that I never altered a man's wages during a trip.

"You not give me more monee?"

"No."

Both Hardy and I were amazed at his impudence, for he had proved himself to be a thoroughly lazy fellow, who took an hour over every little piece of work that came his way; also, when during the last days he had complained of a cold, I had doctored him, giving him both quinine and brandy, and had done as much of the wading as possible myself in order to save him. In the circumstances, we felt he was behaving very badly, and when,

Hardy crossing the Upper Fraser.

at the close of an afternoon of toil, he again approached me, I would not listen to him. At night, however, he visited the tent in which Hardy and I, wrapped in our blankets, were smoking our pipes, and at once took up the sing-song cry, "More monee." I thereupon made him understand straightly and as clearly as possible that his veiled threat would have no effect upon us. He went away muttering, and we to sleep.

The next morning, Porter woke me with the words: "Well, Husky Boaz has gone all right." It was quite true. He and Porter had been sleeping in the lean-to, and Porter had noticed Boaz collecting his belongings on the previous evening, but had thought nothing of it. When in the early hours of the morning he awoke, the Eskimo was lying asleep beside him, but when Porter woke again just before dawn, Boaz had vanished.

A hasty search showed that he had carried off his whale-meat and seal-oil with him; probably he had brought this food in view of just such an emergency. There seemed to be no reasonable doubt but that from the outset he had planned to go with us for a certain distance into the country, and then, on threat of deserting us, to extort higher pay. He probably thought that, having two canoes, we could not do without him; I had seen that he was a very surprised man when we refused to raise his wage; moreover, the presence of the Eskimo camp of trout-fishers played into his hands, as it was not much more than a couple of days' walk for an unloaded man.

Of course he had, like the rest of us, been kept pretty continuously wet with wading in the river while forcing the canoe over shallows, and though the Eskimo seal-

skin boots, which we all wore, are very water-proof, this is little advantage when the water is constantly high enough to run over the tops of them. Still, in our opinion, which was fortified by later experience, the real hard work had not begun, so his desertion was quite unjustifiable. Moreover, it gave us a certain amount of rather grave anxiety, as it seemed quite on the cards that he might take the trap-boat which we had anchored in the mouth of the upper river, in which case, when we came out of the country at the end of our trip, we should be greatly delayed, for we should be obliged either to *cache* all our belongings at the head of the long shelterless lake of the Fraser and walk a weary way into Nain, or else attempt to run down the lake and bay in our canoes at a season when we might be storm-bound for a considerable period. Moreover, we could not guess what sort of a story Boaz would relate in Nain, where he would be obliged to explain his sudden re-appearance, and we did not wish to have a scare circulated. Scares grow from small seeds. It would only need some gossip to say in reply to a question as to our whereabouts, "I do not know; the Eskimo who went with them came back alone." A chance speech of this kind travels fast and grows in importance in places like Labrador, and within a short space of time might be depended upon to reach St. John's, Newfoundland, and from there to be reported home. None of these things happened, however, for Boaz joined the Eskimo trout-fishers at the head of the bay, and with them returned to Nain on August 5th. He did not even report himself at the Mission house, but departed as soon as possible to the outer islands, where he was still absent on his cod-fishing adventure, when we ourselves came back to Nain in the

Down the Fraser.

autumn. We heard, I fear without regret, that after all he had not done well at the fishing.

It is but fair to say that the Eskimo in general have the reputation of being very faithful; we must have struck the exception in Boaz, though he was highly recommended to us in every way; and now, as the Sagas say, "Boaz is out of the story."

Three times in my experience I have been faced with this same demand for more pay, when the asker believed that he held me cornered; but as, at the outset of a trip, I always arrange the wages well in accordance with —or a fraction in advance of—the local rates, and to the entire satisfaction of the men engaged, I decline on principle to yield to subsequent exaction, which, indeed, is never made unless the applicant thinks he has his employer at a disadvantage.

We had now to reconsider our position, as we could no longer provide adequate crews for both the canoes. The valley still presented on either side an almost unbroken wall of inaccessible cliff. There had certainly been two possible openings on the north side: and now, about a mile beyond the camp in which Boaz deserted us, we at length perceived the only vestige of an opening which we had seen since Poungassé—to the south. This gulch or ravine we proceeded to investigate after breakfast. It proved to be very steep, and choked with what in Cumberland are termed screes, "the tumbled fragments of the hills" on either side, fragments, moreover, many of them so recently fallen that time had neither worn away the knife-like sharpness of their edges nor allowed them to settle into a trustworthy stability. Some of them were many tons in weight, and there were uninviting holes and gaps between them. In

the few places where stones had not fallen in abundance the valley bottom was choked with alder, which grew upon the banks of a small torrent.

We made our way about two miles up this gorge and were about to turn back when Hardy suddenly espied a large black bear. This was the first we had seen, but as we had not our rifles, the bear escaped unchallenged and unscathed. Altogether on our first visit Bear Ravine did not strike us as at all a desirable exit from the valley to the plateau, and we determined to see what we could do to get further up the river with our one canoe to a spot where, some five miles ahead, we could see what looked like a second great rift in the southern precipices. The next day was spent in preparation for departure. As there were now but three of us we determined to leave a portion of our provisions, and in order that the supply left behind might not be devoured by bears, Porter constructed a long-legged *cache*, ten feet above the ground, on the trunks of four spruce trees. On this was deposited the superfluous canoe and a first instalment of reserved provisions. Meanwhile, Hardy, who had gone fishing to a small pond which contained some very diminutive trout, had sighted another bear. The animal, however, escaped out of effective range as the rifle was being withdrawn from its cover.

On August 2nd we were once more ready to try conclusions with the river, and having loaded the canoe Hardy and Porter put out into the stream while I took my rifle and started to cut across Bear Valley, in the hope of seeing the bear and perhaps securing what we were beginning to crave for—in spite of fish and squirrels—a good supply of fresh meat. I was not more than a few hundred yards from camp before I heard a

We *cache* the first Canoe.

cry and saw that Hardy and Porter were in dire trouble. Hardy, who was "tracking" from the gravelly shallows at the end of a long rope, slipped, and Porter, who was wading waist deep, lost control of the canoe as it was passing around a very awkward curve of fast water. In a moment it filled and, though Hardy retained hold of the line, was carried into the worst and deepest part of the rapid. Porter, who had rushed into the water after it, was trying to pull the canoe to land, when he and it were swept over the rapid into a nasty hole. At once the bags containing our outfit were dotted over all the surface of the river, the canoe was floating bottom upwards, and Porter had disappeared.

I had an excellent view of the whole disaster, as I had gone on ahead, and when the canoe upset had run back towards the scene of the accident. While I was still rushing down to their help, and after, as it seemed to me, an age, Porter's head came into sight again and he staggered ashore. It had been a very close call for him, as an eddy had taken him under and beaten him against the stones. Meanwhile Hardy had run down-stream, and I could see him like a man possessed, dashing in and out of the shallows, making salvage of our goods. Before I could get near him Porter had turned the water out of the canoe, which had fortunately been driven into the bank, and started back towards our old camp to aid in the salvage operations.

I was unluckily not on the side of the river towards which the current set, nor could I cross it, as it was a roaring torrent, several feet in depth; so seeing that I could be of no use to the others, I hurried back to the camp and lit a large fire, which I knew would be needed presently, as the snow-fed river was bitterly cold.

Before long Porter came up in the canoe, and shouted that he did not think much was lost, except his own bundle, Hardy's rifle and one of the flour bags. Later on we recovered the bundle and the bag, and, wonderful to say, our only losses in this untimely accident were limited to Hardy's ·303 rifle, and a ·22 of mine, two gun covers, and a cleaning rod; added to which, though at the time we did not know it, some of Hardy's films were slightly damaged. Both his camera and mine were fortunately on our respective backs. Upon the whole I doubt if ever a party got out of an awkward mischance much more cheaply, though of course the loss of Hardy's rifle was extremely serious. We were lucky, nevertheless, in that we did not lose my old Purdey shot-gun, which, though insecurely lashed in the canoe, was held in place by a flour bag, jammed under one of the thwarts. This old gun seems to bear a charmed life, as it once spent six days at the bottom of the river De Los Antiguos in the Andes of Patagonia.

I lit a second fire, and soon everything was drying nicely, when heavy rain came on. After it had cleared off, Porter made an effort in the empty canoe to recover the rifle, but unfortunately the current had driven it down into a deep hole beneath a rock, and as the river swirled by at the rate of eight knots, it was impossible, with his extemporised grappling apparatus, to come within striking distance; so that we were finally obliged to give up the attempt.

In the evening more rain fell, and the discomfort it entailed about filled our cup of disagreeable experiences for that particular day.

On the morning of August 3rd we were up early, intent upon a second attempt to get through the rapid

The beginning of the last navigable stage.

Drying out.

water that had undone us. First Porter inspected it in the empty canoe, and while doing this once again saw the buckles of Hardy's rifle case glimmering far below. It was sunk to a depth of many feet, and the current above it was so fast that all idea of regaining it had for the time to be given up, though when the river receded we had hopes of recovering it, as, from the Eskimo at the fishing camp, we knew that there had been a month or so of continuous rain in that locality, and the river was, therefore, much higher than it usually is at that season.

I may here state, however, that when we once more passed this spot in the autumn the river had fallen so much that we were able to fish Hardy's rifle up from its lurking place. As it was in its case, it was hardly damaged, and after a thorough cleaning it shot as well as ever.

On Porter's return from his reconnaissance we loaded up the canoe, and all three of us spent the whole morning in tracking, poling, and pushing her up-stream, only to find that the further course of the river was quite unnavigable, and that to attempt to continue our journey with the canoe would be to court disasters similar to those we had twice experienced. By this time we found ourselves about abreast of Bear Ravine, and made camp in the mouth of it. We had now to decide on one of two alternatives. On the one hand, we could pack up the bed of the Fraser, in search of a less precipitous outlet on the south. But, in the river bed, the alder scrub grew so thick that we should have to cut our way through and also make several relays. On the other hand, we could attempt the ascent of Bear Ravine. We were inclined to the latter, and arranged

that Porter should climb the ravine to reconnoitre, while Hardy and I, after pitching camp, went out with rifle and shot-gun to look for the fresh meat that we greatly needed. This plan we carried out; but our hunt proved unsuccessful, for we killed nothing more interesting than the usual squirrel. After nightfall, just as we were beginning to wonder whether he had not met with an accident on the screes, and were indeed about to start in search of him, Porter returned. He told us that, after a break-neck climb, he had reached the top of the ravine, and come out upon a great rolling plateau, over which the view extended for miles. Away to the west he had seen in the distance a doe caribou, and also a series of small lakes trending in a south-westerly direction. The country he described as good for walking, the only obvious disadvantage being the apparently total absence of fuel. On his way down he had again seen a bear. Such was his report, and in the circumstances we determined to try to portage up Bear Ravine to the plateau.

CHAPTER V.

BEAR RAVINE.

Late into the night we sat beside our fire discussing the articles which we would attempt to carry up on the heights, and it was then that Porter astonished us by saying that he intended, if I agreed, to make an attempt to carry up the canoe.

This really extraordinary feat he set to work to accomplish on the morning of August 5th, and it brought about the incident which follows.

Rising very early, he cleared a road with his axe through the undergrowth near the camp, and carried the canoe across the torrent, finally laying it down, and turning it over on a steep hummock, quite 100 feet high, which was situated on the east side of Bear Ravine Torrent. There he left it, and returned to camp to a very fine breakfast, in the preparation of which Hardy and I had collaborated. Having eaten our meal we started again, Hardy and I carrying each 40 lbs. of flour, my rifle, and some other kit. We passed along the little path Porter had cut, and were crossing the torrent at a ford, when I, who happened to be walking last, looked up suddenly and saw, on the high ground above me, not only the canoe, but a black bear, which stood beside it staring at it intently, and evidently deeply interested in its appearance. I warned the other two, and we all sank to the ground where we were—I on a boulder in the middle of the stream.

The bear was right above, and about 120 yards from me. My rifle was in its case, but in a minute I had slipped it out, and believing the bear must see us in another second, I took a hasty aim and fired. The bullet hit the bear, passing in at the foreleg and coming out behind the ribs. The animal lost its balance, and came crashing down the cliff, then regained its feet, and vanished into a patch of alders. At the shot Porter sprang up, hurled down his pack, and, axe in hand, ran like a berserk into the underbrush after the bear. Meantime I climbed up the slope on which it had been standing, and from the top of which I thought I might command the exit from the patch of alders. For a few minutes I saw no sign of either Porter or the bear, and then suddenly Porter, still carrying the axe, and evidently still under the influence of his berserk fit, emerged from a patch of woods far up the valley. He was obviously on the trail of the bear, and indeed, a little later I saw the bear break cover in front of him.

Upon this I began to run up the valley over the screes, and about three-quarters of a mile away found Porter seated lugubriously upon a rock. I was inclined to be annoyed with him for following the bear so quickly, as, left to itself, it must have lain down and been easily approachable. Porter in defence of his action explained that, though the bear had lain down two or three times, it soon got up again, and as the ground tracking was difficult, he had thought it better to keep the brute in sight. It had eventually entered the cave, which Porter now pointed out to me. He added that at one time among the alders he was "so handy" to the bear, that he might have struck it with the axe but did not do so —wisely, I think.

Black Bear, shot August 5.

The Bear's Cave.

I thereupon went on to the cave, which had a very narrow opening, and, peering in, saw the bear standing up and growling furiously. It was about 8 feet from me, but the cave being very dark and my own body excluding all the light from the entrance, I could not see the barrel of my rifle. I was also much more afraid of the bullet ricochetting from the rock wall than I was of the bear. As I fired the bear stumbled off a flat rock on which he had been standing, and moved back deeper into the cave. To the best of my belief that bullet missed altogether. There was a large rock at the end of the cave, and the bear retreated to the shelter of this, and there, as well as I could gather from the sounds, it lay down.

As the brute remained very much alive and vocally resented our intrusion, Hardy and I decided that he and Porter should go back for their packs while I stayed to make sure that the bear did not come out and make off. About half an hour after they had left me, as I no longer heard the bear move, I crawled into the cave; but not knowing how far the recess extended, or whether there was a second exit, I began to fear I might lose the bear after all, and so crawled out again to cut a pole of alder, to which I lashed my knife. Again entering the cave I began with my improvised spear to feel about for the bear behind the big rock. To do this I had to advance several feet inside the cave, and at the first poke I got a surprise, for the bear—which was by no means dead—crawled out round the rock, and for the moment actually got between me and the entrance.

It seemed, however, more frightened of me than I of it—or perhaps it was too hard hit to show fight—at any rate it backed in again under the rock, and lay there, growling and snarling. Finding I could not make out

in the darkness how it was lying, and so could not use my knife, I crept from the cave as hastily as might be, after which, seated on the rocks among the mosquitoes, I waited for the bear's wounds to grow stiff. Had I been able to use my knife I should certainly have tried to put the animal out of its pain, for it was a disgusting sensation to sit there waiting for it to die. As fate would have it there was nothing else to do in this case; thus, after about two hours the groaning and growling grew faint, and presently the bear was dead.

The only instance within my knowledge of a black bear doing severe injury to a man occurred in Newfoundland, where Reuben Lewis, the present chief of the Mic-mac Indians, was badly mauled in an encounter with one.

When my companions returned we dragged the carcase into the daylight. It proved to be a she-bear, a very old animal, and weighed well over 200 lbs. We set to work at once to gralloch and cut it up; in spite of its age it was in good condition—and, like the fat boy in "Pickwick" with the rook—we gloated over its plumpness.

We soon finished gralloching the bear and then pushed on up the ravine. Hardy, on the second relay with Porter, had returned with a load of 80 lbs. of flour. Finding that he could manage to carry it so far he now insisted on keeping it, feeling, as he afterwards explained, that if he could get an 80 lb. pack up Bear Ravine he would have proved to his own satisfaction that he would be equal to whatever packing circumstances might subsequently necessitate his undertaking during the rest of our journey. As a second man to steady the canoe and to help Porter in his self-imposed task was eminently desirable, I raised

The Canoe 1,000 feet up.

Hardy and Porter nearing Mosquito Glen.

no objection, and so we started. Difficult as portaging the canoe would have been in any circumstances, it was rendered doubly so by the fact that a wind sprang up, which continually caught and overbalanced it. It is no easy matter for one man to portage a canoe over really bad ground, but for two men, especially if there be a marked difference in their heights, it becomes almost an impossibility. And, in fact, there was little that I could do, beyond shout to Porter to stand firm and to seize the end of the canoe in my hand, in order to prevent it swinging round whenever a gust struck it.

In this way we climbed the defile, cutting a path with the axe through the alders, until, as we rose, the vegetation became more and more scanty and the incline steeper and steeper. The whole distance was between $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 miles, the gradient becoming gradually sharper as we mounted ; but much the worst spot was beside the second waterfall of the torrent, for here the chaos of rock had only recently fallen from the cliff above, and had not yet settled. More than once these great fragments slipped and overbalanced as Porter only just stepped clear with the canoe. First and last it was the nastiest bit of walking any of us had ever done, and we were glad enough when late in the afternoon we left the defile behind us, and laid down the canoe in a little mosquito-haunted glen, from which the gradient to the level of the plateau was easy. Interested as we were to see the tableland we did not make any attempt to do so that evening. Truth to tell, the climb up Bear Ravine with packs and the continual vigilance necessary when walking over the rock had strained us to the limit of endurance. Our faces, too, were streaming with blood from the bites of mosquitoes and black flies which had

preyed upon us to their hearts' content as we balanced ourselves upon the boulders. Indeed, we were most thoroughly tired, when by evening, carrying the bear meat, we once more threw ourselves down in our camp on the banks of the Fraser.

Hardy's feat of carrying 80 lbs. of flour up the ravine was hardly second to that of Porter with the canoe, and for a man unused to packing was unquestionably a magnificent test of his endurance and pluck. Measured by aneroid, we rose a little over 1,500 feet in the course of our climb.

The following day being Sunday, we rested, and Hardy made a duff in the evening with the fat of the bear. He had great culinary pretensions, not altogether unjustified.

Having been successful in carrying provisions up Bear Ravine, we felt that we had broken the back of our task, and that we had now finished with the Fraser Valley. It had helped us straight towards our goal to an extent we never could have hoped. With nothing worthy to be called a bend in the valley throughout its entire length, it had carried us in a direction remarkably little out of a due westerly course, the latitude, according to our observations, varying only from 56°33.46 at our first camp near Numaingoak, to 56°44.23 at the point where we ultimately left the river. If the country on the plateau proved practicable for packing, we felt we ought, with over seventy miles to our credit, to be independent of our canoe as soon as practicable leads of water ceased.

On Monday, the 7th, we again packed each his parcel of necessaries up the ravine. On this day we were portaging provisions, and I tried the experiment of

Caribou crossing-place.

Taking a "spell."

putting my load in my rucksack instead of carrying it with a headstrap, as is the custom of the country. I found I could keep my balance on the precarious footing much better when carrying on the shoulders, though the strain on the heart was very great. For the rest of the trip, with the exception of the following day, I always used a rucksack, a fact that later on had a great effect on our fortunes, as it allowed of my keeping my eyes open for game, which is quite impossible for a man encumbered with a headstrap.

On that Monday, as I was climbing up, I came suddenly upon a large she-bear and her cub. They were within 200 yards of me, but my rifle was on the top of the cliffs, as I would not risk our only weapon twice over that appalling medley of treacherous rocks.

Hardy, whose turn it was to shoot (we had made an arrangement to take alternate shots with the one big rifle left to us) had also seen the bears on his way up, and it was not a little tantalizing for him to watch them feed quietly away over the mountain side. This made a total of six bears—of which four, if not five, were most certainly different animals—seen by us in ten days in Bear Ravine.

That evening we returned to camp on the Fraser, and, having *cached* all that we were leaving behind in a large fir tree, we started on our last pack up Bear Ravine on August 8th. That day, while packing with the head strap, I was near to making the last journey of my life, for in jumping from rock to rock among the loose screes near the head of the valley I overbalanced a huge fragment, which, although it shifted a bare yard, only missed crushing my thigh by the fraction of a second.

The nine loads we had carried up comprised 110 lbs. flour, 25 lbs. bacon, 8 lbs. raisins, 3 lbs. tea, thirty packets of McDoddie and Lazenby, and 2 lbs. chocolate food. One ·350 rifle with 65 cartridges, and a ·22 with two hundred, a fishing rod, two tents, a canoe, a Jaeger bed, and four blankets, as well as our changes of clothes, instruments, pitch, rope, canoe poles, paddles, cooking-pots, candles, etc., not forgetting the Stockholm tar and oil. These all made a very tidy heap in Mosquito Glen at the head of the ravine.

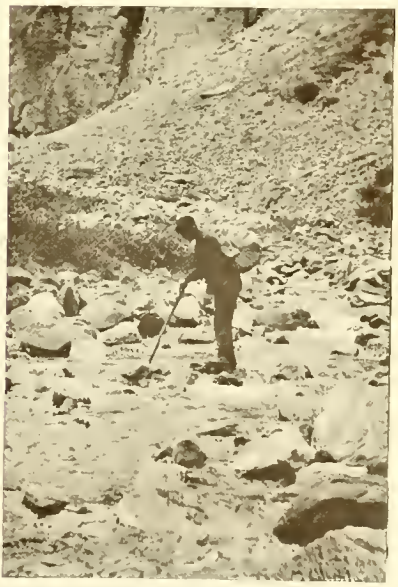
After a short rest we began our climb to the plateau above, and, at first, were in difficulties over a large patch of snow which had not yet been melted by the sun of Labrador's short summer. Surmounting this after a time we saw before us a low rocky knoll, on the further side of which lay our course. Presently we reached it, and were at last free to lay down our packs and take in the surrounding scene thoroughly.

On all sides of us stretched low rolling hills, covered with stones and moss, lakes rimmed round with sparse grasses lay in the hollows. And over them all within the circle of sight—save for the mosquitoes, which hung in clouds over us—was not a sign or sound of life past, present or to come. So I thought for a moment—but stay, what is that? Leading away into the south-west were small piles of stones placed at even distances the one from the other. They dwindled away as far as the eye could see, finally to lose themselves in the glow of the evening sky. Human hands had raised them, they were the cairns heaped up by the Eskimo of a far bygone day, and used for guidance on their spring sledge journeys, after the deer of the barren ground. At first it seemed that they must be too low to serve as guiding marks, for

"Hard lies the path."

Bear Ravine.

Robert Porter.



Bear Ravine' Brook.

in winter the snow would surely cover these little heaps of stones from sight. But such is not the case, for they are raised on exposed spots; and up there on the roof of Labrador, 1,700 feet above sea level, the snow does not lie long or deep, for the wind rules all things and reduces all things—even the snow—to its will.

CHAPTER VI.

OVER THE GREAT PLATEAU.

It is a wonderful place, this roof of the Labrador. Ridge on ridge, some of considerable height, roll away seemingly to the world's end. In the valleys and cups of the hills lie thousands of nameless lakes. The winds, during the greater part of the year, rage over it. It is sheer desolation, abysmal and chaotic. Of dominant notes there are but two, the ivory-coloured reindeer moss and the dark Laurentian stone. On the flanks and on the peaks of the mountains, in the beds of the brooks, on the shore of the lakes all over this huge tableland, are strewn the grey Laurentian boulders in their infinite millions—gigantic and glacier-born seeds sown in the dawning of the world. When the sun shines, to quote Saltatha, the Yellowknife Indian, "the lakes are sometimes misty, and sometimes blue, and the loons cry very often." Then it is a land of stern and imposing beauty, perhaps unlike any other on earth, where sky and clouds are mirrored in the shallow lakes, and the lazy, monster fish rise among the ripples in the red and gold of evening. But when the clouds ride it, and the wind and rain, sleet and snow rave over it, as they do nearly all the year round, a desolation more appalling cannot be conceived. There is no shelter for him who travels it; hardly one of the glacier-driven stones is more than four feet high; every lake is whipped into wrath and thunders on its shores; the loon

"Tired and Irritable."

may cry out there in the storm, but no human ear could hear him. Lucky the man if he can find a rock beneath which to creep, and in that cold refuge shiver as he peers out and watches the elemental Spirit of the Tempest rejoicing in what seems to be the very heart of his kingdom.

We could not help, realising, however, on our first sight of these upland barrens, that in one respect our calculations had been deficient. From any ridge or mound that rose above the general level the land could be seen stretching away interminably in every direction, a stony wilderness, with here and there some coarse grass growing in the marshes, dotted profusely with ponds and lakelets, but without a bush or tree of any kind to break the monotonous and dreary prospect. This was something quite different from the experience of any of the former travellers in Labrador with which our reading had acquainted us, and there followed from it, two, if not three, inconveniences. In the first place we could procure no poles for our tents and had no obvious means of shelter should bad weather assail us. Secondly, fire for warmth was an utter impossibility, and for the simplest cooking a problem. Diligent search revealed here and there a straggling growth of dwarf birch, a foot or two in height at the outside, and the stems of these shrubs did not exceed a finger's thickness. This was the only obtainable fuel, and even that was very far from plentiful. Thirdly, we felt that any obstruction from intervening lakes or rivers might, after the canoe was abandoned, present quite unanticipated difficulties. Relying on timber of some kind we had vaguely planned to negotiate such obstructions with extemporised rafts, tied with spruce root or twisted alder, such as we had

used in other places, but here the necessary materials were wholly and unexpectedly absent.

On that evening we realised perhaps for the first time how difficult a task we had undertaken, and how it happens that the coast-dwelling settlers and Eskimo fear, as they certainly do, the grip of this vast wilderness, on whose verge they live.

While Porter began to cut twigs and roots of dwarf birch for the fire, Hardy and I took rifle and rod and went off into the last half hour of daylight to prospect. The same thought was in both our minds, as we walked together along the margin of the upland lake : " Can any life exist in the heart of this incredible barrenness ? " In the answer to these words lay the success or failure of our advance. Many miles' travel to the westward was our goal—the George River, or River of the Barren-grounds. To reach it we must live the life of the nomadic savage, facing the same conditions as those under which he exists in ever-decreasing numbers. We must find game and kill it.

Just as we passed the head of the Lake, Hardy whispered to me that he could see a ptarmigan among the stones. It was a moment before I espied the beautiful bird, which, although we were quite close, remained perfectly still, evidently in the hope that we would overlook it.

But that was not to be, and soon Hardy was running back to camp for the little ·22 rifle, while I sat down upon a rock to keep what we hoped would be our morning meal in view. Presently, thinking that the coast was clear, the ptarmigan darted away among the rocks, and was nearly out of sight before Hardy returned.

Then once more the ptarmigan "froze." Hardy crept up within range, for, tame as these birds sometimes are, we were in no mood for taking chances, and a moment later we were admiring the wonderful coloration of the first game with which the plateau had provided us.

As dark fell we walked back to camp. Arrived there we ate our ration beside a tiny fire of green twigs and leaves, and then lay down beneath the stars. There was a splendid display of Northern Lights, the "search-lights of God," all across the heavens; but we could not watch them, for between us and the sky with its melting loops and rays of light, danced and whirled ever thickening legions of mosquitoes, lean and grey. We drew our blankets over our heads and spent a most miserable night.

The sun was not yet up when I was awakened from the only couple of hours' rest the mosquitoes allowed me by a cry from the little lake upon the margin of which we had made our bivouac. Looking out of my blankets I saw a sight that filled me with delight. Hardy, in the canoe, on the bosom of the lake, was fast in what looked like a big fish. Just as I joined him he landed a *namaycush*, as the huge lake trout of the Labrador is called. We were very pleased, as—breakfast apart—both of us had the strongest ambition to catch the fabled *namaycush*. Soon we had four handsome fellows—the largest of which, a 3½ pounder, rose to almost my first cast—in the bottom of the canoe. They were, however, but relatively small fish, as in the larger lakes the *namaycush* often reaches 30 lbs., and occasionally scales even up to 40 lbs. and more in weight.

While we were fishing the mosquitoes swarmed over us, nor as the sun rose higher did it bring any relief from,

but rather a reinforcement to, the hosts of Beelzebub, the Lord of Flies. We had grown used to them in the valley of the Fraser, and suffered, as we then believed, almost to the limit of endurance, but we had buoyed ourselves with the hope that the wind and the chill of the high ground would rid us of the blood-thirsty battalions. Far from it. We soon discovered that the mosquitoes of the river valley were but sluggish and incompetent regiments as compared with the armies of these hardy mountaineers, whose vanguard stabbed as with red-hot needles sent well home. As to their numbers, I am hopeless of giving any idea of them. Suffice it to say that when Hardy put his military blanket out to air, phalanxes three or four deep settled upon it, until its colour changed from brown to grey—a seething and loathsome mass of insects; and presently, as we moved about, above each of us rolled a pillar of mosquitoes, revolving and buzzing, and thousands strong.

Having breakfasted royally on two of the *namaycush*, well spread with mosquitoes, we loaded up the canoe and passed on, threading our way south-west through a series of small lakes, and making several portages. As we advanced the character of the country grew yet more barren. Again we realised that we were in a land that bore little likeness to the accepted Labrador described in the various books of travel. This, of course, was owing to the fact that all Labrador exploration has hitherto been carried on largely by way of the river valleys, where timber is plentiful, but here, on the high ground, 2,000 feet above the sea, we learnt what the entire lack of wood means in wilderness travel.

With our veils and thick gloves, we were at first fairly proof against the mosquitoes, but their sibilant song as

Hardy prepared against the Mosquitoes.

Over the Plateau.

they beat against our defences was like the music of a nightmare. And, alas! gloves must be removed for many purposes, and one cannot pack in a veil, nor eat one's meals; and over the portages, of which we made five, they stabbed and thrust abominably. At the mid-day halt, I took over fifty from my tea. These had committed suicide in the interval between its being poured out hot into the billy and the moment when it became cool enough to drink. Nor could we cook cake or fish, but flies were enshrined within it close as currants. We must devour them or starve; and indeed, we hardly heeded them, for at any rate these were dead, and the living claimed all our attention. They thrust through thick tweeds and underclothing wherever these were stretched tight against the body; they found every seam of one's clothes, and pierced a crimson pattern on the flesh beneath. Loaded as we were, they had the tactical advantage, and cruelly they pressed that advantage home. To kill them was useless, even childish; to endure them all day was trying; but when night after night they drove sleep away and sent us smothering under our blankets as a partial defence, thoughts of murder filled our souls as we positively cowered and wilted under the plague.

But man can become used to most things, even to one of the plagues of Egypt, and during the day we made about eight miles, camping in the late afternoon upon the shore of apparently the last of the little series of navigable ponds and lakes.

Immediately on our arrival at the camping place, we climbed a ridge near by, but from its height saw no sign of navigable water in the direction in which we had hoped to find it. To the south, it is true, a chain of

lakes extended, but all the western horizon was filled in with rolling barrens leading to gigantic rock-strewn ridges. We therefore decided that the next day must be spent in scouting.

Rain and storm came with the dark, when, soaked to the skin, and not a little dispirited—for we had seen no game all day—we drew the tent-sheet over the upturned canoe, anchored it with large stones laid upon its edge and crept into shelter. Above us the rain and the mosquitoes beat upon the tent-sheet; inside we lit our pipes, and lying in our blankets discussed the situation.

The morning broke fine and clear after the rain of the night, and the sun had hardly risen before Hardy had caught a $5\frac{1}{2}$ lb. *namaycush*, which provided us with an excellent breakfast and saved any further inroad upon our provisions.

After breakfast we all went off on the day's work, not meeting again until dark, when round our evanescent little camp fire of leaves we held a council.

The question was, should we, figuratively speaking, burn our boats—in other words, leave the canoe so early in the trip? Sooner or later we knew we must do so. It was the actual foundation of our plan for reaching the George River. But after the canoe had been carried with such toil up on to the plateau we had hoped it would ease our journey over many a further mile. Instead of this, but half a day's march from the start, we had reached the end of the chain of lakes from which we had hoped so much.

Porter, who had scouted all day to the south-west, reported some lake extensions; but their trend was too southerly to aid us greatly, and the first and nearest of them lay across a very long and rough portage.

Canoe Camp.

Sandy Camp

Still there was much to be said in favour of taking the canoe, and Porter volunteered to carry it across if I wished him to do so.

On the other hand the argument was, "We are strong now—certainly stronger than we shall be after living a week or more on half rations—we can now make long marches with light packs, and we ought to be almost certain of killing a caribou on the way to the George." Upon this there followed an animated discussion concerning the general "cussedness" of the caribou herds, which have a knack of being conspicuous by their absence when their flesh means salvation, and often plentiful when the traveller has no particular need of their presence.

Yet there were certainly deer on the country, for not only had Porter seen seven, but both Hardy and I had come upon fresh tracks, and at one of the fords quantities of hair (the caribou shed their winter coats in July, and even as late as early August), where the migration had crossed a little earlier in the season and the animals had shaken the water from their coats. Yet all the tracks led, and all the deer seemed to be travelling steadily south-east; which meant that if, as we imagined, the migration had already passed, it was probable that in a few days there would not be a caribou in our section of the country.

This was the fact which finally decided us. If the caribou were travelling away, it seemed to be a case of now or never. A day's march over the long ridges to the south-west, Porter had come to a district which he described as "a more civilised country, where a man can get alderwood."

To this place we decided that we would go on the morrow with light packs, and that there, if all seemed

well, we would make our base from which to start on our final march to the George.

The dawn had hardly begun to whiten when we were afoot; and while Porter and I made our morning sally out among the mosquitoes to gather enough of the sparsely growing dwarf birch to make a fire, Hardy, the indefatigable fisherman, had pulled two *namaycush* from the lake. Both these he saw lying in-shore, and dropped a salmon fly above each with the best results. One was immediately fried; and then, after lashing the canoe so that it would be safe even against one of the three-day storms which at every season visit the tableland, we set out for the line of ridges over which our hopes lay.

At first the mosquitoes tortured us horribly, flying into our eyes and noses, and covering us with countless stings. Our fly-dope, the pleasant mixture of Stockholm tar and oil, of which we had carried up a good supply, kept them off for a few minutes after application; but a shower of rain, or even the heat of hard work, always caused it to run into our eyes, and rendered it a nuisance. All the forenoon we had toiled onwards and upwards into a great wilderness of stones, where for long stretches the boulders lay so close together that in order to progress we had to leap from one to the other. A more inhospitable country than this great barren would be difficult to imagine. It is hardly too much to say that at times our advance was like a battle in a dream; for whenever the wind dropped, or our way led into shelter, the lean myrmidons of grey closed down upon us. Bleeding and swollen, with nerves on edge, we stumbled along until at last, after four hours' marching, we gained the highest point of the ridges, and in the face of a

clean sweet wind which swept our persecutors away for the moment, we began to descend upon the other side.

We had not long enjoyed this delightful contrast when suddenly I saw something move below me among the rocks, and the next instant a caribou dashed out. The deer had seen us, and was galloping across, doubtless to get the wind and so learn more of us. As the deer paused to stare, the bullet went on its way, and the caribou, hit in the chest, collapsed. She was dead before we came up.

Although this deer was both poor and thin, without, indeed, a particle of fat on her whole body, we were rejoiced at our good fortune. If only we could succeed in killing others! What a vista the thought opened up! We would sink the carcases in the ice-cold lakes, one for every two days' supply. This would enable us to reach the George, even should we use the last of our provisions in doing so, and on our journey back we could live on the meat of the submerged carcases—for under water the flies could not reach it and it would keep good for weeks.

The plan with all its possibilities gave us food for conversation until, just after sunset, utterly tired out, and overloaded with great slabs of venison as well as our packs, we walked down the last slope to the "civilised place" where we were to camp. It was situated at the end of a deep lake from which a stream flowed away to the west. Upon the banks there grew a few clumps of alders. On both sides of the river and the lake there ran from east to west a series of high sandy ridges which formed the only variation from the other innumerable ridges covered with grey quartzite.

After gathering wood and arranging our bivouac, Hardy and I left Porter frying a pan of deer's meat, and climbed to the top of the highest cone-shaped sandhill near by. From its summit we looked out to the west. On the other side of a vast marsh dotted with lakes and ponds which glimmered like milk in the twilight, there rose two lines of hills, the last a mere outline of snow-patched blackness—vague and half seen. Hardy took a bearing. These hills lay due west, and the crossing of them would mark the next stage of our march.

CHAPTER VII.

THE KINGDOM OF BEELZEBUB.

On our return to camp we cut enough alders to make a fire, and Porter set about cooking a pan of deer's meat in the lee of a rock. While we were eating this, although we sat upon the shore of the lake with a strong breeze blowing, the mosquitoes got to their deadly work, settling in scores upon the sides of our faces which were turned from the wind. I suppose we were tired with our long pack, for, speaking for myself, their persecutions seemed very hard to bear with equanimity, and once again I was reminded of the smut in the eye which destroys in the most receptive nature all the glory of any landscape. Here were we, on the margin of a beautiful, rock-bound lake in a virgin land, the Northern Lights dancing and waving in the heavens, the few voices of the wilderness around us; in a land where there were caribou; in such an environment, in fact, as Hardy and I had discussed, dreamed of and looked forward to for many a day, and yet these loathsome insects left us no feeling but irritation and the dread of a sleepless night.

Worse was to come, for, to add to our discomfort, a shower blew up with the wind and soon heavy rain began. In the dark we crept under the tent-sheet, rolled boulders upon the edges, and, with the cheeriness of men on a forlorn hope, we—as the quaint saying has it—addressed ourselves to slumber. But address as carefully as we might, we could not attain to that

blessed condition. For the chill of the descending rain had no effect upon the enemy, and it was very close under the canvas, so that just as one of us was growing drowsy, the other—Porter had retired with his own piece of canvas to an overhanging rock—driven beyond endurance would beat away the mosquitoes, and both would be broad awake again. We tried devious methods to relieve the situation. I covered my face with a veil, but could get no clear air through it, so thickly did the mosquitoes settle; I wrapped my head and shoulders in a blanket and was soon in an unbearable Turkish bath; I daubed myself with Stockholm tar and oil, but dissolved by the heat, it ran into my eyes. After an interminable period darkness at last began to fade, and I fell asleep.

When I awoke, the rain had cleared off, and Hardy, who was fishing from the bank, had landed two *namaycush*. One of these we fried for breakfast, after which Porter started for Canoe Camp for a second pack, while Hardy and I took the rifle and went off for a day's hunting.

Climbing the sandy ridges along which we had travelled on the previous day, we almost at once sighted a small caribou, advancing at a rapid pace from the westward; above the wretched creature's head revolved and towered the usual pillar of mosquitoes. It was walking quickly upwind, evidently with the intention of keeping its persecutors from settling. We could have cut off and killed this deer, but as Porter on his return journey was to carry in some more meat from the caribou shot the day before, there seemed no need for doing so, so we permitted it to pass on its way in peace, while we turned our steps towards some rolling stony hills, among

Looking Westward.

"Cooking our Mid-day Meal beside some upland water."

"We threw ourselves on our faces to avoid the mosquitoes."
(Note the swarms of mosquitoes on the clothing).

the heights of which we thought we might find a good stag.

After the rain, the sun had come out, and on that day the climax of our sufferings from the mosquitoes was reached. We wore veils, but the walking was very rough, and I, at any rate, found that through the gauze I continually misjudged distances, so I cut eyeholes in my veil, and through these openings the mosquitoes poured in. Also I had only one glove, as the other had been lost at the time of our canoe accident on the Fraser, and though I covered my hand with handkerchiefs it was soon swollen to an astonishing extent.

Here and there as we walked, we found the tracks of deer and the sheddings of their winter coats; at one point a road several yards wide had been cut by their hoofs, but on this the tracks were mostly a month old. Still we were continually seeing fresher signs, and, as the hills closed in about us, we knew that we might come upon game at any moment. Indeed, as we topped a ridge a large doe or young stag leaped up in front of us and stood for a moment within fifty yards before he or she fled over the hill, but the horns were, of course, quite worthless and so Hardy did not shoot.

All the morning we wandered on, sometimes sitting and spying vast expanses of wilderness, across which black mirages gathered and faded, and with every hour the mosquitoes seemed to increase in numbers. Up to this time Hardy had borne their onslaughts with admirable patience, but even he felt that their untiring ferocity had on this day touched the limit.

Lest my readers should imagine that we were somewhat thin-skinned to be thus ruffled by the forays of the "flies," as they are usually called in the Labrador, I

shall adduce the testimony of two or three travellers. Giving, as is due, *place aux dames*, I will cite Mrs. Hubbard, who writes :—

"The big Labrador bulldogs (flies as large as wasps) were out in force that day, as well as the tiny sandflies. One thing we had to be thankful for, was that there were no mosquitoes. The men told me that there are never many where the bulldogs are plentiful, as these big fellows eat the mosquitoes. I did not see them doing it, but certain it is that when they were about in large numbers there were very few mosquitoes. They bit hard and made the blood run. They were so big and such noisy creatures that their horrible buzzing sent the cold chills chasing over me whenever they made an attack. Still, they were not so bad as mosquitoes."

And again :

"The flies, which in the Nascaupee country had been such a trial to me, had not driven the men to use veils except on rare occasions, but now they were being worn even out on the lake, where we were still tormented. Backs and hats were brown with the vicious wretches, where they would cling waiting for a lull in the wind to swarm about our heads in such numbers that even their war-song made one shiver and creep. They were larger by far than the Jersey mosquitoes and their bite was like the touch of a live coal. Sometimes in the tent a continual patter on the roof, as they flew against it, sounded like gentle rain."

The great American naturalist, Alpheus S. Packard, who visited the Labrador with a view to studying insect life, and to whose efforts such knowledge as is possessed on the question is nearly all due, is said on one occasion to have been driven out of the country by the mosquitoes

and black-flies. But of course neither Mrs. Hubbard nor Packard visited the high ground, where, in our experience, the mosquitoes were far more numerous and savage than in the river valleys.

It is a well-known fact that all sub-Arctic lands are scourged by the Grey Plague, and whatever their faults they have at least been responsible for some vigorous word-pictures. For instance, Sir Henry Pottinger in his delightful book on Norway, "Flood, Fell and Forest," speaks feelingly and informatively on the subject. While crossing the high fjeld on his way to the Tana River, he writes as follows:—

"The horses are a distressing sight. From nose to tail, from hoof to withers, their unfortunate bodies are covered with what might be taken at a casual glance for a grey blanket clothing, but reveals itself to inspection as a textile mass of seething insect life, so closely set that you could not anywhere put the point of your finger on the bare hide. And yet, quivering all over, stamping, shaking, lashing their tails, they continue to graze, perhaps conscious how much fuel is required to replace the life that is being incessantly drained from them. It is well that we have not a dog with us.

"In defiance of the vicious swarms, we again endeavour to carry out our notion of camp-life, light a fire, and meditate cooking breakfast and making tea; but flesh and blood are not equal to the task. As John leans over the camp-kettle his sight of it is obscured by the mosquitoes on his veil, I can at any moment kill the shape of my hand in them by slapping him on the back. We therefore abandon the idea of warm food and drink, and rousing one of the men, who, beyond unloading the horses, have no conception of making themselves useful,

send him to bring back from a neighbouring drift a can full of snow, and concoct with mingled lemon and cognac a deliciously refreshing brew of weak iced punch.

"Then we haul out our mosquito-nets, packed with some forethought uppermost in the saddle-bags, and lying down beneath them, gloomily munch dry biscuits and slices of cold sausage. Now a mosquito-net is an excellent defence as long as it can be suspended over a bed and kept from touching the body, but when in contact with the latter it affords little or no protection, for the mosquito can with ease insert his proboscis through the fine meshes, and by perseverance reach the flesh of his victim.

"That I have to dwell so much on this distasteful theme is wearisome to me, and must be so to the reader, but one might as well try to ignore the presence of vehicles and foot-passengers in the streets of London as that of mosquitoes on the Arctic fjeld. I have spoken with those who have had experience of the pests in all parts of the world as well as in that region, and for numbers, size, and venom they all give the palm to the demons of Finmark and Lapland. For such small creatures they exhibit an astonishing amount of character and diabolical intelligence. They will dash through smoke like a fox-hound through a bull-finch, creep under a veil or wristband like a ferret into a rabbit-hole, and when they can neither dash nor creep, will bide their time with the pertinacious cunning of Red Indians. We wore, as I have said, stout dogskin gloves, articles with which they could not have had much previous acquaintance, and yet they would follow each other by hundreds in single file up and down the seams, trying every stitch in the hope of detecting a flaw; every inch of the sewing was out-

lined by their unbroken ranks. Unluckily our gloves were not gauntlets, and in carrying the gun there was half an inch of exposed flesh, which became fearfully bitten. By the time we reached Karasjok I counted over sixty separately distinguishable bites, and there may well have been many more on that small area of cuticle on my right wrist, despite my endeavour to shield it with strips of wet linen; it was swollen to nearly the size of my forearm. It may well be that only the good condition of our blood, and constant exercise, inducing free perspiration, saved us from an attack of fever.

"The problem presents itself, Why are the vermin so horribly bloodthirsty and so perfectly formed for sucking blood? It is one of the great mysteries of creation. On the uninhabited fjeld of Finmark they must, as a rule, exist on vegetable diet, the chance of blood so rarely occurs; there is no local life except a few birds with impervious feathers. In the summer-time the Lap drives his reindeer to the sea. No native is fool enough to cross the fjeld at that season unless he be driven thereto by the rare call of duty, or tempted by the gold of a mad Englishman, and there may be, at the outside, half-a-dozen such madmen in half a century. In winter when the reindeer sledge can skim merrily over the universal waste of snow, disregarding the boundaries of land and water when the Tana itself becomes a solid highway, when the priest and merchant return for the church service, school, and market held at Karasjok, travellers may not be so uncommon; but whatever other peril or hardship they undergo, they are at least free from the Grey Terror. In the valleys and by the rivers, that is, in the permanently inhabited parts of northern

Norway, the mosquito plague can at times be bad enough, but in its hideous redundance it exists only on the bare fjeld, a primeval and enduring curse, inexplicably developed to its utmost in a region seemingly the most unsuitable for its effective working: the less chance of blood, the more bloodsuckers. That this should be so is a mercy, but my point is the mysteriousness of the whole thing. One thing alone is to me a greater mystery: naturalists affirm that it is *only the female mosquito* which bites! I can but say that I have never, in that case, met with the male insect. But what a terrible opening for a general libel on the fair sex does this affirmation afford to the cynic and satirist."

To turn to a later day, we find that the breed which garrisons the country has grown no less malignant. Mr. Cutcliffe Hyne in his racy and interesting story of "Through Arctic Lapland" gives his experiences amongst them.

"At Pokka, Hayter was in small temper for food. The bites of the preceding night were giving him the most abominable pain. From scalp to heels he had no sound square inch on all his skin. The whole of his body was puffed and reddened, and each bite was its own centre of irritation. When he scratched himself he bled, and he had to scratch. . . . . "

Later he writes again:—

"We carried the marks of their work written on us in ugly letters. Our arms were swollen from wrist to elbow, so that they fitted tight in the coat sleeve; our hands were puffed up like boxing-gloves; we were bitten, bitten, bitten all over, through corduroy, under bootlaces, under hair. The scraps of paper in my pockets on which I had been scribbling notes, were splodged

Sandy Camp River.

with blood till they were unreadable, and in this torment we had been marching for ten consecutive hours before the dew came and brought relief."

And finally Mr. Hyne gives this powerful picture of a night spent at Ivalomati :—

"But did we get so much as a doze? I fancy not. We lay there motionless upon the hay, with our lower extremities hidden from the insects by the wet blankets, and our heads roof to roof beneath the odorous tent; and the sweat dripped out of us at every pore. A midnight sun was blazing high above the hut, and the air in the room was like that of an oven. The heat under the tent was stifling. Ever and again first one mosquito, and then another, and then a third, would get inside our defences, and we would have to bestir ourselves to slay them. . . . . We passed that night in a condition bordering on frenzy, and let not those who merely know the mosquito in Africa, in India, and the Americas, judge us too hardly when I say that at times we wished most heartily we had never set foot in so detestable a country. Cold, we could have endured; privation, we were prepared for; but this horrible stew of flies ground upon the nerves till we were scarcely responsible for our actions."

But to return to Labrador.

It may be that I have dwelt upon our sufferings and their cause at too great length, but in defence I must declare that it is generally believed the mosquito of the Labrador is *facile princeps* in numbers, in bloodthirstiness and in the tactics of warfare. Be that as it may, at about two o'clock on the day of which I write, we were sitting on a knoll surrounded in every sense of the word by more mosquitoes than I have ever seen before

or hope ever to see again. Our sealskin boots were covered with crawling masses, and where they were tied in under the knee the mosquitoes drove their lances through the firm-woven tweed with maddening effect.

At length we were once more stung into continuing our hunt, but after proceeding about two hundred yards, we stopped again, and in the hope of driving off some of our pursuers, we kindled a great fire of moss, which threw up huge gouts of dun-coloured smoke. In this we sat, but though I held my boot in the midst of it only a few of the mosquitoes seemed to really mind its acrid pungency, the majority clung on.

At this distance of time, the incidents of that day are only cause for laughter, but in the thick of the struggle laughter was impossible, and presently by mutual consent we turned and made an up-wind detour back to camp. There we determined to draw the tent-sheet over a rock, creep inside its shelter and light our pipes. We thought we might thus in some degree escape from torment.

As we walked along, I remember we agreed that no foreign army would ever invade the interior of Labrador. Indeed I do not believe that a mass of men could bear a week of it in the height of summer, the Grey Legions would conquer the bravest and best disciplined army in the world.

I will now give an extract from my diary.

Aug. 13th. Cold and bleak, but flies in every sheltered spot. Went again for a walk to look for a stag. Saw mosquitoes. What these mosquitoes are is indescribable. They give *no* rest, *no* peace, day and night they go on and on and on. I think a man totally unprotected would be killed by them in a very short space of time. I

remember reading somewhere that the Indians in the old days used to kill their Eskimo prisoners by exposing them naked to the swarms of mosquitoes. It would be difficult to imagine anything more fiendish. At this moment I can hardly write, and have certainly killed a score on my hand since I wrote these few lines. Then one cannot wash without an attack that is almost insupportable. At night one has to sleep in a wet bed, since one dare not choose a sheltered place or no sleep would be possible because of the mosquitoes everywhere. Where one's clothes are drawn tight they pierce through even two thicknesses of cloth and all along the seams. One is a mass of bites, tortured by lack of sleep, wracked with nerves.

Aug. 14th. Sunday. Hardly any sleep, mosquitoes. At this moment there are thousands under the tent-sheet and, as usual, it is raining. Nearly demented. (Later.) Since I wrote the above the wind has gone round to the north-west and cleared out the flies in part. It is cold, but one must either freeze or be torn to pieces by the mosquitoes. Just under the lee of every ridge there are any quantity of them in ambush, and you have only to get out of the gale for them to crowd on you, and their bites hurt in the cold. It mists and rains. I have never been so uncomfortable on any trip in my life, also *inter alia* what with the cold, damp, wet and flies, I fear everything in the film line will be ruined. Of course it is something to have come across this bare treeless tableland, as well as to have investigated the valley of the Fraser, but of big stags I see very little promise. . . . .

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HEART OF THE WILDERNESS.

Early in the morning of August 15th each one of us divided his few belongings into two sparse heaps. As we were upon the point of starting from the base-camp on our final effort to reach the George River, it was of the first importance that we should travel light. Thus it had become a matter of pride to cut our personal outfit to the limit. One after another of our small "necessaries" were condemned to the ever-growing heap which was to remain behind. Finally, a canvas sheet, our blankets, an extra pair of skin boots each, a change of underclothing, and a few odds and ends, were all that went into our bundles. It is quite wonderful what a man finds he can do without when he has to march fast, far, and loaded over rock-strewn hills and through league-long marshes.

For food we carried 18lbs. of flour, 5lbs. of bacon, 2lbs. of raisins, eight Lazenby soup-squares, $\frac{3}{4}$lb. of tea, $\frac{1}{2}$lb. of tobacco, and a bottle of saxine. To this add our cooking gear, a ·350 Mauser rifle with forty rounds of ammunition, and a ·22 with twice as many, two cameras, a liberal supply of films, and some pieces of deer's meat—enough for perhaps three meals.

After making up our loads, we placed all that was to be left behind in the lee of the great rock of Sandy Camp, drew canvas over the heaps, piled stones on top, hoped the wolves would not raid the *cache* while we

were absent, and then, slinging up our packs, turned our faces west.

Far in the distance, through the clear morning air, rose the two ridges over which we must climb. At first it seemed as if we were going to have an unfortunate start, for, in the first stillness of the morning, great clouds of mosquitoes were waked to life, and over each man rose that pillar of flies to which we were becoming as accustomed as we were to our own shadows. But as the sun rose higher a breeze began to blow, which beat down our enemies into the shelter of moss and stone, leaving us free to enjoy the glory of the morning.

And what a glorious morning that was! The sky and the lakes were so blue, the wind so sweet and fresh. On all sides of us stretched out the austere and magnificent landscape, for once smiling and at rest.

During the forenoon we marched steadily forward, until our advance was blocked by a river. This was a contretemps which we had anticipated when we left our canoe behind, but which we had been quite unable to provide against.

There was, therefore, no choice, and we set about wading the river. The task proved a very nasty and difficult business, for the current was strong, and the rocks beneath it were covered with "slob," and exceedingly slippery. To fall down in such a river, when one has no change of clothes, and is travelling at an altitude of 2,000 feet above sea level in a fireless land, even if one is not swept away or hurt, is, to say the least of it, a disagreeable experience; but when falling means ruining camera and films, too much care cannot be taken.

Indeed on this occasion, as on others, the latter were entrusted to Porter, who, thanks to his experience on the ice with the Newfoundland sealing fleet, was by far the most sure-footed of our party.

At length, after over an hour-and-a-half of toil and anxiety, we succeeded in carrying everything safely across the several branching streams, but had not gone very far upon the other side before another wide stream barred our path. While we were looking for a ford across its turbulent waters I came upon a ptarmigan, which I shot, thus providing us with a lunch.

When the two rivers were safely behind us we began once again to make good time, so much so that by sunset we had crossed the first of the great ridges towards which we had been walking all day, and which, at one time, we had hardly hoped to reach.

With the disappearance of the sun the wind fell away, and the mosquitoes returned to harass us. But we travelled on and on far into the gloaming, looking for a patch of dwarf birch to supply us with fuel enough to boil our kettle; but it was nearly dark before we found a sparse growth on the southern slope of a sand-hill. Here, so slender were the twigs that it took an hour-and-a-half to prepare our meal.

This of course, was the fault of our outfit. I know now that the proper outfit for such an expedition as ours would be a light mountaineer's tent with a jointed pole, and a Primus stove, such as Dr. Nansen used in his "Crossing of Greenland." Such a tent could be pitched and would hold anywhere, and in it one could, to a certain extent, dry one's clothing and weather out the worst of storms. As to provisions, they should be selected with a view to as little cooking as possible;

Crossing the Lake.

hard biscuit and dried meat would be best. Instead of this, while admirably outfitted for a country with any wood growth, for these sterile heights we were not prepared. Nor, in the matter of provisions, were we better off. Our chief trouble lay with the flour, which could not be eaten until it had been baked camp-fashion in the frying-pan. On that night, as on others, all hands took a turn at holding that instrument of torture over hysterical fires of leaves that flared up to unapproachable heat at one moment, and went clean out not three minutes after.

On the morning of August 16th we woke to examine our surroundings with eagerness, for, as we had made our bivouac in the gloaming, we were only now able for the first time to see exactly the nature of the country which lay about us. We found that we had slept in the lee of a sandy ridge, hard by a meagre growth of dwarf or maiden birch. Behind us, eastwards, rose the ridge over which we had come on the previous evening; to the south extended swampy land, cut up into many little lakes, and dotted with low outcrops of rocks; northwards lay a larger lake, to the surface of which many fish were rising in the quiet, mosquito-haunted morning. Our way to the west was blocked by the lofty ridge that we had seen ahead for so many miles, and in the valleys and hollows of which the winter snow still lingered in huge patches. Apart from the music of the mosquitoes, which was never still, the vast face of the country lay absolutely silent and apparently lifeless under the dawn, which had risen, as it sometimes does in Labrador, in a wide splash of lemon colour, dispelling the white and rose forelights across the eastern hills.

While Porter prepared a rough breakfast over a dozen consecutive fires of the swiftly-burning dwarf birch, I walked along the ridges in the hope that by good luck I might sight a caribou.

After I had gone a little way I came upon the comparatively fresh tracks of deer, where four animals must have passed during the small hours within a few yards of our sleeping forms. A wolf had been following them, or, at any rate, had recently gone along the same trail.

My walk from the camp proved of no value; the only living thing to be seen in the clear light was a loon that cried incessantly upon the lake away to the north. So clear was the morning that, although the bird was more than a mile off, I could see the disturbance of the water whenever he pitched from one of his short and uneasy flights.

Returning to camp, I ate my ration, and soon after the three of us had put together our small impedimenta and set out once more upon our march. Before long we were toiling up the flanks of the steep, snow-patched ridge, and at the end of a long second "carry"—we divided our day into a number of "carries," as we called them; each "carry" meant from twenty-five to forty minutes' march, after which we rested for five minutes—as I say, just when we came to the end of our second carry, a large deer, which must have been lying among the rocks above us, becoming startled by the noise of our advance, or else seeing us from some point of vantage, appeared, running with ungainly strides across our front. He was distant every yard of half a mile, hopelessly out of range for shooting. From time to time he would stop, stand, and stare at the three strange, humped

figures which climbed beneath him, invading his solitude.

When we first saw him one of us said at once, "If we could kill him we should be almost sure of reaching the George," but crouch as we might in the shelter of the rocks, or try as we might to get nearer to him, the deer on the high ground above us was always our master in strategy. No doubt he thought us some new kind of wolf, or an unlucky movement of ours had raised all his suspicions, for allow us to approach him he never did. At length, abandoning even curiosity, he dashed away over the hill.

We pushed forward until we felt the air strike cold from the great valley which, as we came over the high ground, was at last exposed to our view, but in all its area of rock and lake no sign was to be seen of the caribou we had hoped to shoot.

Much of this day was again taken up with picking our way among the great quartzite boulders, which in this district overlie the hills. Now and then a sandy ridge gave us easier going; but for the most part the walking was hard, and, to us who wore thin sealskin boots—by advice of those used to the ordinary aspects of Labrador—at times extremely painful. But when one rises at dawn and pushes on till dark, a surprising amount of ground can be covered.

As we advanced the country to the south of us seemed to grow more and more rugged, a fact which prevented us from swinging in that direction in order to search for wood from the scattered clumps of dwarf birch that always grow on the sheltered side of the larger hills. Although at lunch-time Hardy indefatigably fished the waters of a wide and stony river which we had just

crossed, yet his efforts only resulted in the addition of a single insignificant trout to our allowance. Meanwhile, numerous small trout were visible lying in the shallow places, too small to take his fly.

During the whole of that day we saw no sign of ptarmigan, in spite of keeping a constant look-out for them. Indeed, our experience taught us that these birds are extremely difficult to see. Again and again it was only by catching one of its swift movements or hearing its curious croak that we were made aware of the grey bird's presence, so closely does the coloration of the plumage accord with the tints of rock and stone. Often we would travel through a whole day seeing no more than some shed feathers; and on the morrow, within a few hours a shift of wind would drive all the few ptarmigan in the district out into the open. The traveller over the high ground of Labrador, even if he carries a shot-gun, will be rash to trust to obtaining any supply of these birds. Throughout our marches to and fro we saw but twenty-seven, of which we killed eight. Also, a shot-gun is too heavy, and its ammunition quite out of the question for long portage. We had with us, therefore, a ·22 rifle, and with this we killed such small game as came in our way. It shot with wonderful accuracy, and I do not remember our losing anything we fired at, though down in the valley of the Fraser River it was valueless, except for shooting squirrels, as the birds rose from the thick underbrush of willow and alder, where it was impossible to observe their presence in time to get a sitting shot.

We were travelling on a daily ration of a cupful and a half of flour, a few raisins, and a thin slice of bacon per man, so that it had become a matter of

paramount importance to secure a caribou ; as should we fail to do so, a time of hunger was probably close upon us. The chance of sighting caribou was extremely vague, as days might elapse before a deer happened to come into our range of vision, for among the ridges and hollows through which we were moving a band of caribou might pass within a hundred yards without our becoming aware of their presence. However, we continued to hope for the best, and Hardy, whose turn it was to shoot with our single heavy rifle, asked me to take any opportunity that might present itself of killing a deer, as he was unaccustomed to the sighting of the weapon, which belonged to me.

About five o'clock we again struck a continuation of the high, sandy ridge that we had been following in the morning. Along the summit of this we were excited by discovering fresh tracks of deer, that had passed not more than an hour previously. Our feelings can well be imagined as we pushed on after them. A few minutes later, as we were descending the side of a hill towards a long lake, a caribou (which from the horns I took to be a two-year-old stag) suddenly bounded into view.

"Down!" I whispered. "Lie down!"

My two companions, who were walking in front, dropped to the ground. I did the same, in the hope of balancing my pack so as to be able to take aim. The deer meantime remained watching us with evident curiosity, and, in fact, before I got the rifle levelled, had begun to move at a quick pace, evidently with the intention of circling round us to get to windward. As we were but too well aware that a very short distance would give the wind and the alarm, I fired

at once, and, though I thought I heard the bullet tell, the deer bounded away out of sight in a second. Tearing off my pack, I took up the chase. Over the next hillside I saw the caribou going straight from me. I fired twice more, but neither of these shots got home. I was feeling positively sick with the idea that I had missed at such a critical moment of our journey when, as I was about to fire a last despairing bullet, the deer rolled over dead. We found later that the first bullet had cut the side of her heart, for the animal turned out to be a very large barren doe with fair-sized horns.

Soon Hardy and Porter joined me, in a very cheerful frame of mind at the prospect of a good supper. As the sun was still shining, though it was low in the west, I thought I would photograph the deer. Before I could get my camera ready—a matter of a few moments, as it was in the very mouth of my rucksack—the eyes of the deer were completely hidden from sight by crawling swarms of mosquitoes. (See illustration.)

Having gralloched our quarry, we took some of the meat to carry with us, and sank the remainder in the adjacent lake. Shortly after, enlivened by the usual orchestra of mosquitoes, we made a bivouac on the peak of a sandhill.

The doe's horns I placed on a high rock, intending to carry them off if we chanced to return that way. As a matter of fact, Porter did come back to the very place, but the horns were gone. Tracks on the soft sand about the rock told the whole story. A she-wolf and her cubs had passed evidently on the trail of the migrating caribou. They had found and eaten all that was left of my deer,

The First Caribou.

This photograph was taken immediately after shooting the Caribou

(Note the mosquitoes which have settled in the eyes).

even the horns, which, as may be seen, were soft and in velvet. Immense numbers of wolves follow the herds, but are rarely to be seen by day. During all our journey only once did we catch a glimpse of one, when, from the top of a ridge I saw a wolf galloping along the valley below. He was in chase of something, but what it was I failed to discover. At night, of course, they move about freely, and almost every morning we came upon numerous tracks, freshly made, and always leading east or south in the direction of the travelling caribou.

As the lion's roar to the African traveller so is the howl of the wolf to the solitary wayfarer on the Labrador, where, after sundown, as he sits by his lonely fire, he may listen to the sound, almost the saddest in Nature, of the prolonged and mournful howl of the wolves crying their hunger to the stars.

The shooting of the deer put us all in capital spirits, for not only did it provide us with an ample supply of fresh meat at the time—and how good the heart and kidneys tasted that night to our famishing appetites!—but it would enable us to eke out our scanty ration of flour so as to last longer; and besides, as I have said, it left us a most invaluable emergency supply of food to fall back upon on our return journey to the coast.

We now felt that, bar unforeseen accidents, we could reach the George. We need not, and we would not, turn our backs to the west until we had filled a kettle of tea from its waters.

The following day we made a very long and tiring march, for our packs, loaded with some of the meat of the deer, were heavier than they yet had been. The

only incident of the march was that Hardy shot three ptarmigan with the ·22. During the day it rained in occasional but heavy showers, so that before we camped we were wet to the skin; and up there on the roof of Labrador, if a man gets wet, wet he must remain, or if he be cold he must take up his pack and run until he restores his circulation.

These are among the exigencies of travel over any bare and fireless land, and from time to time they bore hardly upon us, since for change of clothes we each carried only an extra garment or two. It is nothing to be wet all day if you can light a great fire in the evening and dry out, but we had no chance of any such good luck. The wind was our best friend. It dried us, it banished the flies, and, perhaps more important than all, it blew away the mists and clouds that in still weather hang thick across the plateau, blotting out all landmarks and making even travelling by compass a hard matter, for owing to the wide, stony tracts and the many lakes and ponds, sight is peculiarly necessary to the traveller over the great central plateau.

We knew now that we must be approaching the George, if our observations were at all correct, and we climbed to the summit of every ridge with hope and expectation. But ever ahead of us stretched more barrens and more ridges, with no encouraging sign that we were nearing our goal. We would occasionally be elated by finding water flowing west, but nothing can be deduced from the direction of such small rivulets as we came across, and each time our hopes were soon dashed by finding another stream flowing in the contrary direction.

The George River.

The George at last

On August 18th we started the day with a self-denying ordinance, cutting down our ration of flour by a third, by way of precaution. After a rainy night it cleared, and four miles out from camp we again struck an outcrop of sandy esker ridges, such as had befriended our battered feet from time to time. Advancing along these, we could, as usual, find no wood with which to cook our lunch, when Porter espied upon a crag the deserted nest of an osprey. This he carried down wholesale, and, making a fire of it, we boiled the kettle and ate our ration.

We had, on the previous day, come upon slight indications which seemed to promise that we were at length leaving the stony wilderness behind. We had seen more of the dwarf birch among the rocks, though most of it was not above a foot or eighteen inches high and of small use for firewood. The effect of climate upon tree growth can be studied to good purpose in Labrador. For instance, there is a willow very common in most parts of the country which never exceeds the fraction of an inch in height, and for foliage bears but two or three tiny leaves.

Earlier in the day we had come upon pieces of dead spruce of fair size, but in small quantities, which would lead one to suppose that these slopes had once been forested. Below us, at the foot of the ridge, lay a lake, and after our meal we continued upon our way for a mile and a half, only to find that we had reached the end of a point of land, and that a strip of water several yards wide barred our advance. The ridge which we had taken for the south shore of this lake was, in fact, but a promontory thrust out into it. At first it seemed as though we should be forced to turn and walk back

some miles of very bad going, right round the south shore of the lake, a spot so grim and bare that Porter said, "If, as they say, Labrador is the land God gave to Cain, this is where Cain must lie buried." But none of us looked with a kindly eye upon the suggestion of retracing our steps, and ultimately, finding that the lake appeared not to be very deep, we decided to make the attempt to wade across it. We stripped and went down into the water with our clothes tied in bundles to our packs. Fortunately, owing to a high north-west wind, the flies were entirely absent throughout the day. Had they been with us, I shudder to imagine how they would have feasted upon our nakedness.

We were pretty well tired after wading the lake, and so climbed up the opposite rise at a very sober pace. It was low, and its crest promised nothing particularly interesting. But we had hardly topped it when we saw that from this ridge the land fell to a large valley. It was a truly welcome scene that we looked down upon. Half-way down the slope rose a little cluster of spruces, the advance guard of the woods, and beyond them trees gathered thickly in the hollows and upon the hillsides. Below us shone a silvery gleam of birches, while farther on again lay a great water.

We hurried forward, anxious to make sure that we were not mistaken, but, though we trudged on till it grew dark, the water, which had at first sight seemed so near, still remained in the offing. At length it grew so late that we made up our minds to camp for the night. Hardly had we come to this decision when a stone rolled under my foot; I slipped, fell, and found myself on the ground most unresignedly nursing a strained ankle and tendon. I managed after a bit to hobble on to

the camp, and that night we slept not knowing whether we were in truth close to the George River or not.

Next morning my ankle was too stiff and swollen for walking, so I proposed to cook our meal while Hardy and Porter went down to the valley to settle the great question. Hardy took my rifle with him, since we were again—and the more urgently in view of the delay my sprained ankle might bring about—in great need of meat.

Scarcely had Hardy and Porter disappeared, than over against me, on the other side of the torrent by which we had camped, a stag with very fair horns walked into view. He was over 400 yards from me, but in a place where he might easily have been stalked. After moving about for some time, quite unconscious of my presence, he passed away over the hill, and I turned my attention from watching him to my cooking. I also made a list of the provisions that still remained to us. The list was a very scanty one: a little flour, tea, and baking-powder, with about a pound of bacon, and a few pieces of the caribou meat killed at Doe camp.

After I had finished this all too brief task I had nothing left to do but to await the return of my companions. I confess the time seemed very long as I listened for their approach; my impatience was only natural, considering how much depended upon the report which they were bringing. Suppose the large body of water that we had sighted was not the George, but only some lake, round which we should have to walk?

When Hardy and Porter came at length, they brought the best of news. They had made their way to the shores of the water and found that it stretched north

and south for miles, and was in places over a mile in width. This made it certain that we had reached that great widening of the George known as Indian House Lake. To add to our assurance, moreover, they had climbed upon an eminence, and from there had seen, set upon tongues of land which jut out from either shore into the water, the deserted lodges or tepees of the Nascaupees or Barren-ground Indians, for it is from these lodges that the lake takes its name.

CHAPTER IX.

AT INDIAN HOUSE LAKE.

The hollow of the valley, which is filled with that great widening of the George called Indian House Lake, is a mile in width and about twenty in length On either side of the river rise high rolling ridges, dotted with spruce, willow, and juniper, which grow freely among immense boulders and masses of rock. The whole of the land surface is seamed with the old trails of caribou that have pursued their age-long wanderings in this desolate region.

Tradition gives this place as the spot where, in 1894, an Indian killed the last recorded specimen of the red or barren-ground bear. The whole country is covered with the bones of deer; another noticeable fact is that rarely could one look round the sky without seeing flocks of ravens in the air. The croak of the raven, the cry of the loon, and the howl of the wolf are certainly the three characteristic sounds of the interior of Labrador.

Concerning wolves, I was much interested in trying to discover whether these animals (which, though seldom seen by daylight, are, as I have said, very numerous in Labrador) chase or attack the lonely traveller or hunter, a pastime that, according to report and the illustrated papers, their cousins of Europe undoubtedly indulge in. Who cannot recall a picture of a flying droshki and its

bearded driver, with the passenger shooting a revolver over the crook of his arm at the pursuing wolf-pack?

But on the Labrador—near the settlements, at any rate—the wolf bears a fairly good character in this respect. The only instance that I know of, when wolves attacked a man, I have on the authority of Bishop Martin of Nain. A settler had killed some seals on the edge of the ice, and returned to his home. Later on he went back to bring in the carcases, taking with him only a spade, as the place was not far from the station.

While he was engaged in shovelling off the snow which had collected on the bodies of the seals, four wolves came down upon him in a threatening manner. He was rather helpless, having no gun with him, but he defended himself by cutting at the neck of one of the animals with his spade. Then, keeping his face towards them, he held them off with the spade as he retreated in the direction of the shore and the settlement, which he reached without mishap. The fact that they meant to attack seems to be proved by their following him for some distance.

More than ever as I sat beside the camp-fire on the day after our long-desired arrival at the George River, did I regret the unfortunate accident to my ankle. The muscles near the tendon had been badly strained, and I found myself unable to do more than hobble about. Any attempt to travel over the rocky ranges and through the treacherous valleys, choked with boulders and moss, appeared to be absolutely out of the question. Complete rest was my only hope. Yet, although this presented a very pleasant prospect to my weary limbs as well as to my ankle, the

Where the Nascaupees clean deer-skins.

Indian House Lake.

outlook was not so bright as it might have been, owing to the fact that we were in the centre of a sterile country, with but four days' provisions on short rations remaining to us.

In the morning, it is true, Hardy and Porter had found and fired at a herd of fourteen deer, but these lost no time in leaving the locality, for their forms were later seen by all of us against the skyline of the mighty ridge above Slippery Brook—as we named the torrent by which we were camped. Having passed to windward of us, we knew only too well that the deer would put many a league of safety between ourselves and them, and would follow the herds which had already passed away on their migration. After lunch, my companions again left the camp, Porter to gather wood, and Hardy—having been requested, in the words of the old squaw Nokomis,

> "Go, my son, into the forest,
> Kill for us a deer with antlers"—

had started away into the vast medley of trees, boulders, and marshes that hemmed us in on the north. In order to try and do something towards the general support, I picked up the rod and began to fish the torrent which roared within twenty yards of the camp. On the previous night Hardy had taken six trout from this quick water, but when he sallied out among the mosquitoes at dawn he had failed to get a single rise. I was luckier, as after a few minutes' fishing I saw a good-sized trout rise, and before the numerous mosquitoes drove me to bury my face in a "smudge" (the smoke of a fire of damp moss and leaves) I had caught him and three of his fellows. After this, though I tried both fly and spoon, I could catch no more. Just as I

returned from fishing I heard the report of a rifle, and an hour later Hardy came into camp with the greater part of the meat of a very small caribou.

Soon—very soon—the kidneys, heart and liver were sizzling in the frying pan, with three thin concomitant slices of our now most precious bacon. As we had been a month on rations, and the latter part of it on very short commons—having, indeed, had but two full meals since leaving Sandy Camp, and those on the occasion when I had killed the deer—we did full justice to the meat, and the pan was emptied more than once before pipes were pulled out, filled, and lighted. Then we held a council.

It was finally decided that Robert Porter should go back over the trail to bring up a relay of provisions while Hardy and I remained in the camp, where we were to dry the meat of the caribou. But though we tried to carry out this programme we were not very successful as regards one portion of it, for it was necessary that Porter should have a rest before he started; consequently, by the third day, very little was left of Hardy's deer, which, as I have said, was a small one. We were, moreover, helped in disposing of the meat by foxes and ravens, which found and took toll of the carcass on the night after it was killed and before Hardy could reach it the next morning with his packing-strap. The scanty amount that remained over we dried in a rough and ready fashion upon the flat rocks by the river, but if we left the meat for a single instant or ceased waving branches of leafy birch above it, every piece became black with blowflies, blackflies, and mosquitoes. While engaged in this pleasant occupation, we for the first time really understood how and why

Slippery Brook.

Camp beside Slippery Brook.

it is not good for man to live alone—especially in the Aretic and sub-Aretic.

In civilization it is said that a wife does not always add to her husband's ease or render his life more supportable, but up on the Barren-grounds the worst of wives would be better than none. For on the Labrador, to care for the meat and scare away the flies would certainly be included in the list of a woman's duties.

There, among the heathen tribes, if a man's wife dies—provided he be not a polygamist, in which case there is less need for hurry—he often marries again within the week, and even the Christian Eskimo widowers are with difficulty persuaded by the Moravian missionaries to allow six weeks to intervene between the death of a first wife and a second wedding.

Certain it is that on the very day when the six weeks have elapsed the hunter presents himself at the Mission House with a new bride, and asks that the marriage service may be speedily read.

But to return to the process of meat-drying, which led to this digression. We dried some pounds, and would have dried more had it not been that some animal, probably a fox, raided our larder during the night. We imagined that we had placed it in safety by sinking it in the water of the torrent, but when we awoke on the morning of the 21st a great part of it was gone, and as we had practically no flour or other provision left, the loss was a serious one. A great piece of good fortune, however, followed close upon it, for on the same evening, while I was sitting talking to Hardy by the fire as the sun was beginning to sink, a caribou suddenly appeared on the other side of the torrent. Seizing my rifle, I had time to get in a shot just

before the deer crossed our wind. It turned out to be a doe, with horns of thirteen points, and soon we had her carcass cleaned and sunk in a deep pool far beyond the reach of even the most cunning of foxes.

The next morning Porter got away early, and Hardy and I were left to draw our belts tight and yet tighter, for we decided that it would be only common prudence to keep the meat of the last deer as a precaution against unforeseen eventualities. In the wilderness only a very thin partition exists between safety and danger, and it has been in consequence of ignoring this fact until it was too late that many have perished.

Day by day the swelling of my ankle was subsiding; the weather was good and everything favourable, though the lack of all farinaceous food affected us considerably at first.

During Porter's absence, Hardy and I spent most of our time in fishing and hunting. There were very few trout in Slippery Brook, and without a canoe it was difficult to fish Indian House Lake; but Hardy succeeded in taking two fine *namaycush*. These, rather to our surprise, rose in the fast water of the torrent.

Some two miles to the north of our camp we came across an interesting geological phenomenon, which was repeated elsewhere along the valley of the George, though in less marked a manner. This was a beach of clear gravel, elevated at a height of 700 feet (by aneroid) above the present level of the lake. The lake from which the George descends northwards towards Ungava Bay in that succession of terrific rapids and falls so graphically described by Mrs. Hubbard,

Hungry Days at Slippery Brook.

Tracks of Migrating Caribou.

is itself a very considerable height above sea level. This could not therefore be an example of one of those raised beaches that are so plentiful along the Labrador coast. Hardy suggested that the explanation of the curious phenomenon might be the same as that given for the existence of somewhat similar formations in Scotland, which are known as "The Parallel Roads of Glenroy."

The theory is that in the past a glacier flowing westward along the line of the esker ridges, which were a marked feature of our route, fell into the George Valley and temporarily dammed up the waters of the lake to the height of the gravel beach, that was left far up on the hillside when the flood at length receded. At any rate, whatever cause brought about the formation of the raised beaches on the George, the fact of their existence is here mentioned as it may be of interest to those concerned with the geology of Labrador.

At length Porter returned, bringing with him a pack of a few pounds of flour and bacon. He had gone and come at the rate of twenty-five miles a day—a fine performance over such a country. We were at this time very thin, and more than a little run-down, and therefore decided that we had better indulge in a couple of days of full rations, even though that might mean real hunger later. I have always been strongly of the opinion that men working hard *for a long period* can overdo the ration-cutting business, and that the party who start strong and live upon what the Red Gods send can win out better than the party who never have a full meal, and eke out a small supply of provisions over endless days. But the party that eats

its food must be composed of men used to every aspect of the wilderness life, and must be *certain* of a minimum game supply. It is a very good rule—I know of none better—to estimate the amount of fish and game one expects to secure and then divide the expectation by four. If the answer to that sum is enough to take the party to safety, well and good ; if not, it is common sense to be very careful of the food in hand.

Hardly had Porter arrived—certainly he had not been in camp above two hours—when a tremendous storm began to blow from the south-east. It clean blew away our fire, though protected by a break-wind of boulders, and as it brought one or two trees near by crashing to the ground, we thought it wiser to cut down those which overhung the camp. Had this gale —one might in other latitudes call it a tornado—caught Porter upon the bare and shelterless plateau he would have had a miserable, if memorable experience.

All night long the wind howled and roared, banishing sleep ; then, shortly before dawn, it shifted and partially carried away our lean-to. We rose and changed the position of our camp until it was once more back to wind—a bleak business.

On August 29th we broke the camp by Slippery Brook, which we had occupied since the 18th, and set out for the southern end of Indian House Lake. My ankle, though stiff and apt to swell after a long day, did not retard our speed very much.

All the morning we travelled over the ridges, and it was late in the afternoon before we reached the level of the lake at a point about a dozen miles south of our camp. Skirting the shore we found each promontory set with the

remains of the deserted Indian camps from which this reach of the river takes its name, for it is here that the tribe of Nascaupee Indians make their annual killing of the deer, which, in migration, cross the narrows of the lake in immense herds. Their course is not always the same—if it were, the problem of existence would be easily solved by the Indian—for in some seasons the migration passes elsewhere, along some other and perhaps distant route.

As it grew dark we came to an Indian camp which had only recently been deserted. All about it were scattered the bones and hair of deer, which, from appearances, seemed to have been killed a month or so previously. The Indians had departed, it being the season when they make their summer journey to the coast.

It was with great interest that we examined the deserted camp and the various devices for dressing skins, and while Hardy and I were doing this Porter went on over a hill to prospect. As he crossed the brow of the ridge an eagle rose suddenly, and, going to the place, he found that it had killed and partly eaten a young black fox. The month being August, of course the skin was worthless, but, had it been December, the skin of this fox, small as it was, would have been worth some hundreds of dollars. Poor Porter!

When Porter returned it was growing late, and we went up from the deserted Indian camp into the twilight of the woods, where, as it was bitterly cold, we made a large fire, by the light of which we set up our camp.

Later, we took stock of our provisions, and it was almost a shock to discover the diminished amount

our hunger had left to us. There was a single full meal of caribou venison, with two or three small pieces, which we meant to keep over. This shortage did not prevent our enjoying a fair supper of meat and flour, as that night was the last we should spend in the timber, for, owing to the provisions being at so low an ebb, we had determined to set out in the morning upon the march back to the coast. Therefore, the next dinner time would find us once more upon the bare plateau, where we could hope for no fuel more adequate than the leaves and stems of the dwarf birch. So the motto was *carpe diem*, which we fully carried out, and afterwards sat long by the camp-fire smoking and discussing the journey that lay before us.

Before very long, however, the talk, as usual, veered round to the all-important topic of food. How well one knows those conversations of hungry men! Lead the talk where you will, back it turns, like a magnet to the Pole, to the various dishes one would order were one in such-and-such a restaurant. Nearly all one's desires are towards plenty of fat, plenty of sweet, and plenty of rather heavy, solid bread: true hunger abhors kickshaws and seasonings! Fat mutton, strawberry jam, bread and baked potatoes—that is the meal which tempts a man when he is really hungry!

From time to time I have known hunger, and, as a matter of personal experience, I have found that the desire of eating reaches its height before one begins to starve. Starvation, indeed, like other disagreeable things, is painful, and it is impossible to feel as hungry when one is suffering spasms of pain and emptiness as in the earlier stages, when the only feeling is the intense craving for food.

On this night, however, after the first comfort of our dinner had passed off, we were just in the mood to discuss what we would eat an we had it. It was late when at last we rolled ourselves in our blankets and turned in.

CHAPTER X.

THE EASTWARD MARCH.

On August 30th we broke camp on the George or Barren-ground River, with our hearts and minds set on our journey Eastward Ho! We had stayed on the George to the last possible moment, and when we finally started on the return journey we had the following provisions left. There was a little over two pounds of flour, three-quarters of a pound of bacon, a few ounces of tea, three soup tablets, and enough deer's meat for a light lunch. At Camp No. 4, Sandy Camp, a five-pound slab of bacon was *cached*; a day beyond that, again, at Camp 3, lay a little chocolate food, the balance of a box of raisins, and twenty pounds of flour. On this morning, however, our foremost aim was to kill a deer.

We were located well down towards the south end of Indian House Lake, at a point where the current was very perceptible. It would have taken only one full day's march to regain the route by which we had travelled when coming into the country. But all three of us disliked the idea of retracing our footsteps, though, in view of the extreme shortage of provisions, that would perhaps have been the wiser course, for, though fifty-five miles straight does not signify, they may, on the Labrador, only too easily tail out into a hundred. It was impossible to foresee what obstacles a new route might not present. We knew that there

was a series of large lakes under the Height of Land, and, supposing we happened to strike one of these in the centre, the walk around it might add days to the length of our journey. Besides, this fifty-five miles included a climb up to the great central plateau, which rises to over two thousand feet above sea level about this region, and afterwards the crossing it to Sandy Camp; and at that height our progress might be seriously impeded by the mists, which we knew, by experience, often lie for days together upon the vast table-land. Our provisions, however, could only be stretched to provide us with half-a-dozen rather unsatisfying meals, and we could no longer count with any degree of likelihood upon shooting a caribou, as even the stragglers of the migration seemed to have passed.

Nevertheless, as I have said, we were most unwilling to go back over our old trail, and finally we decided to take our chance and strike east and then north-east, so as to cut our old route at or about Doe Camp. To our half-dozen certain meals we hoped to be able to add with the rod or the ·22 rifle, for there appeared to be every chance of our catching *namaycush* and shooting ptarmigan.

We got away upon our return march in good time, but unluckily had not gone very far when, among some tangled alders and stones, I again wrenched my ankle, which had not grown very strong since my original accident with it. This was a tiresome beginning, but by the aid of a stick to lean on I managed to carry my pack, though over bad ground I was much the slowest sailer in our fleet.

After a portage of more than an hour we paused on a ridge and looked back on Indian House Lake,

stretching far beneath us. We could still discern upon the promontories the skeleton Indian teepees from which the lake received its name. The slopes and the hollows between were soft with woodland, spruce, birch, juniper, willow, and alder, the latter making green the shores of the lake to the margin of the blue water. On the farther side we could see towering up the first of the great series of rolling ridges which divide the George from the Whale River, sparsely sprinkled with black spruce; to the south our view was bounded by a rocky bluff, but to the north it extended over twenty miles till the great water lost itself in the foot-hills of the Bridgman Mountains.

Then we turned from the fertile valley to look at the route we were about to travel. A huge ridge struck upwards into the blue of the sky, for it was a blue day with frequent *dwis* or showers. The flanks of the ridge were covered with reindeer moss, over which lay the usual heavy scattering of quartzite boulders. Across this country we journeyed until mid-day, when we made a halt near a stunted clump of spruce, blown crooked by the winds. Beyond these, no sign of wood showed except dwarf birch. Here we ate a pound of our flour and a thick slice of bacon each, making up our minds that we would go hungry at night unless we chanced to kill something. Then till late in the evening, we marched over some of the roughest ground we had yet encountered. Once only we saw game, in the shape of five ptarmigan, which to our chagrin would not permit the eager Hardy to approach within a hundred yards, and consequently flew away without offering a shot.

The Last Spruce.

A "Raised Beach" in the George Valley.

At five o'clock, descending a hill, we saw below us some sandy ridges by a distant lake, and there we decided to make our hungry camp. While we were still a mile from the lake, which was turning to gold in the evening light, I suddenly saw something silhouetted against the glow, and as I watched this something moved against the background.

"I see either a man or a deer," I said.

In an instant the apathy of marching had fallen from my companions and they were all keenness. In that upland air our hunger was great indeed, and the prospect of a supperless bed had weighted our weariness.

"I see it too; it is a deer!" said Porter in great excitement.

The animal in the meantime had turned broadside on, and had lost the foreshortened outline which makes a deer standing full face in the distance and against the sky-line look not unlike the figure of a man. Hardy had lost no time in getting out his glass, and soon found the deer.

"It has horns," he said. "I think it is a stag."

A vision of fat kidneys spluttering in the pan flashed through my mind. Hardy handed me the glass just as the deer, moving parallel to us along the side of the lake, passed behind a rising dune out of our sight. On this I hastily threw down my pack, and, seizing my rifle, ran to try and cut the animal off. Hardy and Porter remained where they were, lying hungrily anxious upon the hillside.

As the wind was blowing from the nearer side of the lake, I thought it wise to make for the opposite end of it, as, if he did not alter his course, I should then be able to come directly on the stag. If I tried to approach him

from any other point, he might by a chance turn and get to windward of me; and that I knew would drive him clean off the face of the country-side, for the Labrador caribou, once he catches wind of man, never fails to leave the district altogether.

That was a memorable stalk for me. Once again I experienced some of the feelings with which I had approached the first deer I ever shot. Indeed, I felt positively sick with excitement as I hobbled along my way, for all that that stag meant to us kept working in my mind. To kill it meant, at the best, that we should escape some days of vigorous hunger; at the worst, if the mist came on and lasted for any length of time, to lose it might possibly mean starvation. Meantime I struggled on, as fast as my ankle would allow, over the boulders which choked a part of the valley, and soon I was climbing out on the first of the ridges near the lake. Here I turned and began to run, as I thought, parallel to the stag, shortly to find my further progress stopped by a deep and rapid stream.

Being well aware that the Labrador caribou do not —in my experience, at least—face water as readily as do those of the Newfoundland species, I believed this stream would turn the stag, so I veered round towards the lake and climbed the second ridge. I peered over the summit, but could see nothing of the deer, and I had just made up my mind to follow the river to the lake when I caught sight of an object moving on the same side of the ridge as myself. The next moment there was the stag, about a hundred and fifty yards away, in full flight across the marsh! I made for the nearest boulder, and, steadying myself against it, fired twice. The first bullet went, as far as I was able to

judge, over his back, as he splashed along with the water flying high around him; but the second—the glorious second—struck him right in the lungs, and within a few yards he fell dead. Although the antlers were still in velvet and were so soft as to be worthless, I have never felt more thankful for success than I did then as I mounted the ridge to signal my companions to come up. They joined me in an uncommonly short space of time, for, as the lie of the ground prevented them from seeing what had happened, they did not know whether they were destined to dine or starve. As they came up, being tired out, I happened to be sitting on a rock in an attitude of apparent dejection and Hardy jumped to the conclusion that I had failed.

I then learned the maddening experience to which these two famishing men had been subjected. No sooner had I left them, and got well out of hearing, though not out of sight, than the stag headed straight towards them down the mile-long marsh which lay between them and the lake, thus following a line which would inevitably, if we both continued in our respective directions, bring him to windward of me and destroy all chance of a shot. Meanwhile I pursued my way, quite unconscious of what was taking place. As Hardy and Porter had no rifle, and were unable, as the distance made it impossible, to give me warning, they could do nothing but sit still and watch, hoping that by good luck I might change my course. "But you would not do so; you ran on and on like a man possessed," they told me. They finally had the chagrin of seeing me disappear from view behind one of the ridges, still running in my original direction, while the stag continued to advance more slowly towards them.

At last on a sudden they saw him stop, then rush forward, and almost at once he also disappeared behind the same ridge as myself. A second later they heard my two shots.

I was amused, and indeed not a little touched, to find how very careful Hardy was not to hurt my feelings, for as he came towards me he naturally concluded that the stag's change of course at the psychological moment had prevented my getting a fair shot. When, however, I pointed over the hill to the dead stag lying in the marsh, the joy of my companions was by no means disappointing.

Our luck that evening was phenomenal, for as we were cutting up the stag the heavy showers that had been falling all the day ceased, and near at hand we found a growth of spruce four feet or so in height. Before long we were sitting round an aromatic little fire, while above us a great display of Northern Lights flickered and waved across the sky. Through their white luminosity the stars shone with a strange blue light; out on the water a great northern diver uttered its cry—a cry so wild and mournful that it seemed like the voice of the ultimate wilderness. That was a night to be remembered—a night which made up for much that had been disagreeable and difficult; and as there were no mosquitoes (after August 25th we were not again much bothered by these pests) we sat long over our little fire, and, it must be confessed, consumed pan after pan of meat, which Porter had fried—a culinary effort rendered none too easy by the fact that we had broken the handle from our frying-pan—and felt strength flow into our limbs.

I was awakened the next morning by Hardy, who whispered that a fox was stealing our meat. We were

sleeping on the bare hill-side about 300 yards from the carcass of the caribou. The rising sun showed an Arctic fox upon the body of the stag, while two others were in the near vicinity. Of the meat they had devoured a surprising quantity. Shoulders down and haunches up, they must have pulled and tugged against each other. After trying in vain to drive them off, Hardy took the little ·22 and stalked them to within range, when he shot one of the thieves; yet the others almost immediately returned to their meal. As it seemed senseless to kill any more, and as they persistently returned, he and Porter carried the meat, or as much of it as was left, into camp, whereupon the foxes went back again to the carcass. They were very fearless, probably owing to their ravenous hunger. All over the table-land we found the predatory animals very abundant, though what they found to prey upon, apart from lemmings and young ptarmigan, remains a mystery.

After this we were quickly astir, and when Porter had sewn patches on his own and Hardy's boots we left Lucky Camp, as we named it, carrying with us the greater part of the meat of the stag. Fine at first, the weather grew rapidly threatening, until early in the afternoon the showers condensed into one continuous downpour, driven before a heavy wind. The outlook seemed so hopeless that we decided to camp betimes, but could find no suitable boulder, among all the thousands that surrounded us, over which we could with any prospect of comfort draw our tent sheet. We therefore wandered on, and finally, soaking wet, we got up a most uncomfortable camp underneath a great rock, into the shelter of which we crawled among our wet packs.

A few minutes after we had, as one of us phrased it, "gone to ground," on looking out under the flapping sheet, which every moment threatened to carry away in the gale, I saw a doe and her fawn shaking the rain from their coats on the other side of the valley. After staring across at our camp for a minute, they dashed away westward and were blotted out in the storm and mist. Whether or no we could have killed one of them, had it been needful, it is hard to say; but I think it very doubtful, as they were not nearer than two hundred and fifty yards, and it would have been a lucky shot indeed that could score a hit through the veiling rain at such a distance.

As these were the last deer we were destined to see, I will now write a few words about the game-supply of Labrador. Our experiences in this matter were, I think, essentially typical of the part of the country we wandered over. In outfitting for our march to the George we took a bare ration, trusting to supplement it by game and fish. As I have mentioned more than once in this book, the only other expedition that, to my knowledge, has entered Labrador on a similar theory was that of Leonidas Hubbard in 1903. The disastrous result of that expedition is well known. Some critics have rancorously attacked Hubbard's plans, calling them rash and fool-hardy; but only those who have travelled in Labrador can realise how savage was the ill-fortune which dogged that expedition almost from start to finish. When calm weather was essential for their progress it blew remorselessly for days; at the time when they most needed food, then it became most scarce, even in its smaller forms; when a choice had to be made blindly, the most difficult way invariably appeared the best and was chosen. These things were pure misfortune.

Ration for Three.

Our *Chef.*

As we journeyed through Labrador, more and more did we come to admire Hubbard, Wallace, and Elson. The length of time for which the three held out, and the pluck they showed, entitles them to more than credit. It was a fine and a gallant record, and one without parallel in the history of Labrador exploration.

So convinced were we that Hubbard's disaster was due in a great degree to ill-fortune, that we were willing to, and ultimately did, risk the success of our trip to back that opinion. Had we been obliged to depend entirely on the food which we packed in with us, we could not have reached the George, spent twelve days on its shores, and returned to Sandy Camp. But we were able to add the following items to our supply on the way. Upon the plateau and at the George we killed five deer, twelve *namaycush* averaging three pounds, fifty-nine trout, eight ptarmigan ; and had it not been for the meat, which rendered more shooting unnecessary, we could undoubtedly have made a larger bag both of deer and of small game.

Up on the tableland ptarmigan were few and far between ; and in all our journey we saw no sign at all of porcupines, geese, or owls. It is impossible to deny that we were exceedingly fortunate in meeting with caribou. When packing towards and at the George, the sixty-nine deer that we saw—all travelling south-east—were, we concluded, the stragglers of the migration ; when coming back, and while engaged in relay work, we covered a distance altogether of over a hundred and seventy miles, and saw only four.

Taking the above facts into consideration, it is obviously unsafe to trust to meeting the caribou. Such meeting is largely a matter of chance, but the traveller

may fairly expect to supplement his provisions in summer with a certain amount of fish and of small game. Allowing a ration of half a pound of flour per day to each man (we had considerably less than that), and a quarter of a pound of bacon, or their equivalents, much could be done, provided always—and this is important—that the party are willing to face cheerfully the hardships that a short ration inevitably entails. For there is nothing that more impairs the work of most men, and brings out the worst in them, than a spell of continued privation; and the intending explorer will do well to pick his comrades very carefully before undertaking a protracted trip across the barrens. Along the rivers there is no excuse for stinting the food, as plenty can be carried in the canoes, and, in any case, it is wise to do as we did—that is, carry an over-generous supply of food to the farthest possible point on the route and there *cache* it. This begets confidence, if nothing else, and, should unforeseen difficulties arise, makes a snatch at success practicable.

But to return to the narrative of our journey. After the deer had vanished the rain continued to increase, and the wind came whistling under the rock as if determined to tear away the tent-sheet. Owing to its violence we were compelled to close up either side of the tent by means of our usual device of weighting the edge with stones. Had we not done this it would certainly have ripped away and left us shelterless. Even as it was, we had a bitterly disagreeable night, the discomfort reaching its climax when, about midnight, the wind suddenly shifted to the north-west, bringing with it heavy sleet, which blew in under the canvas, so that we had a miniature snowstorm going on inside the tent.

Shortly after dawn we crawled out of the deep snow which had fallen inside our almost useless shelter, to find that Porter had risen before daylight and was cooking a meal of soup in the lee of a rock, round which the wind howled in violent gusts. After eating it we broke camp at once, and were soon on the marsh. Though the thermometer was not low, the weather was searchingly bleak and cold ; the sleet seemed to whistle in solid masses before the wind. It was a day that offered no temptation to linger by the way, and we made excellent time over a very rough tract, our chief trouble being the mist, which ringed us in greyness, hampering us greatly, as it was impossible to recognise any landmark. At mid-day the cold had affected our fingers to such an extent that it was a long time before we could light a fire.

Towards evening the weather cleared, and, though the wind continued very strong, the air was beautifully cold and bracing. All the conditions were in striking contrast to those which obtained as we journeyed in. The whole face of the country was changed. Gone was the green of summer, and the great gale of the 27th had beaten down the grass, which now lay flat in yellow wisps and tussocks. That storm was the herald of winter.

How brief is the summer on the highlands of Labrador ! The snow does not melt till July, then with a rush midsummer comes. Grasses and leaves grow almost visibly, the wild cotton soon flings out its little white pennons, millions of berries ripen on the ground, the loon cries, the ptarmigan calls, and you may even see a butterfly balancing in the warm wind. But then also awakens the countless army of hunchbacks, lean and grey mosquitoes, piping blithely for blood.

So summer reigns. Then suddenly one day, in the middle of August, after the sun has sunk behind the barren crags through a balmy warmth of evening, one may wake up to find everything transfigured and the first snow of another season already falling. There may, and will be, fine days after that, but the face of the country is no longer young; winter has laid its mark upon it—a mark that only spring can efface.

We were now eager to finish our journey and to leave the table-land before more boisterous weather set in; and as such might be expected any day, we travelled long and fast. Indeed, we made stages which we should never have attempted on the way inland. We often marched, carrying our packs, for spells of sixty or seventy minutes, then five minutes' rest, and on again. Nor was it necessary to delay for hunting or fishing, as we had with us sufficient of the stag meat to last us to the Valley of the Fraser. For the most part we met with wild and showery weather, wet days and cold, fine nights.

As we advanced, the character of the country altered, the hills were less high and more rounded in contour, the crop of stones not quite so abundant. Entirely without shelter the patches of maiden birch became more and more meagre. Here and there we cut across mighty deer roads, but, contrary to our summer experience, saw scarcely a fresh track upon them; all the caribou seemed to have travelled away to the south-east, and we marched on over a region utterly destitute of game. To describe in detail our crossing of this tract would be tedious, and it is sufficient to say that, thanks to the sustaining stag-meat, we picked up our *caches* of food in good order, and finally from the ridges near Canoe Camp sighted the stupendous cliffs

of the Fraser Valley. On the next day, the 4th of September, we made our way down Bear Ravine. The hill-sides were covered with berries and we were naturally expectant of seeing bears, but to our surprise these animals, which had been so numerous, seemed all to have moved away, and one set of fresh tracks was all that we could find.

The climb down the Ravine tried my ankle severely, and it was very black and swollen when, with much relief, I at last put down my pack at the higher of our two *caches*.

We were agreeably surprised to find that the bears had not raided our provisions. Even a bag of sugar which we had lashed in a tree remained untouched, and at first this seemed the more remarkable as many signs told us that a big brute had thoroughly explored the site of our old camp. But the explanation was not far to seek. In making our *cache* a tin of our famous fly-dope of Stockholm tar and oil had been overlooked and left lying at the foot of the tree. This the bear had found and bitten through. Apparently the dainty morsel had not pleased his taste, and judging of our commissariat by that sample he had decamped without making any further investigations. The tar and oil had, of course, run out, but this was not now of much consequence, as although there were still a good many mosquitoes and black flies about, their activities troubled our hardened skins but little, especially as they disappeared with the cold gloom which filled the valley when the sun sank behind the cliffs.

On September the 5th Hardy and Porter once more, and for the last time, climbed up Bear Ravine to *cache* the canoe upon the uplands and to bring down the last

of our impedimenta. The state of my ankle made it impossible for me to accompany them, so I spent the day in camp cooking, and although I was very sparing in what I ate, the little I did take caused me a good deal of pain. I think we were more starved than we realised, and when I stripped to bathe in the Fraser, my anatomy seemed unusually distinct. It was not that we had ever actually gone without food, but we had spread out a little over so long that the cumulative effect had certainly turned a heavy into a middleweight. Still, we never really suffered hardship (except from the mosquitoes) though our hunger was often disagreeably apparent, especially in the cold small hours.

The desire to eat and eat on that day while I sat over the fire baking large brown buns full of sultanas grew greater and greater, so much so that at last I had to give up the culinary effort and hobble off on a squirrel hunt, which saved me from myself.

It was latish when Hardy and Porter returned. They had seen neither game nor sign of anything alive. The canoe they had *cached* against the assaults of the coming winter, perhaps against those of many winters, under the lee of a ridge. As we sat beside the great fire that we built that night in the Fraser Valley, we wondered whose would be the hand that would launch our canoe in some future spring. The journey down Bear Ravine with packs was, in its way, a more dangerous experience than the journey up; the leaping from rock to rock giving less chance of testing the stability of one's foothold, and more than once Hardy barely escaped accident.

The followingday was devoted to rest, boot-patching, and dismantling the *cache* of the first canoe. All was in

good order, and as the river had fallen some feet Porter succeeded in fishing Hardy's rifle from the river bottom to which it had sunk over a month before. The rifle was unhurt, and Hardy shortly after celebrated its recovery by decapitating a Canada-grouse and a willow-grouse lower down the valley.

It took us two days to run down the Fraser, Porter and I working the canoe, and Hardy walking with his rifle, full of hope that he would kill a bear. Not one, however, did he see. On the second day, Porter and I found a fine sea-trout which had been killed in one of the falls, and on this providential fish we lunched, reaching the "skiff" and the shores of the long Fraser Lake an hour before sunset on the 8th. Here we set our camp, and an examination of the sandy bed of the river showed that the sea trout were running up in great numbers. An effort to shoot one of these (Hardy had the rod) failed, but when my companion put in an appearance we had great sport. No fish was above three pounds, but they were game and fought well.

On the 9th of September the wind was too high to start early, but as it fell towards afternoon we got aboard and sailed far on into the night, when we landed and slept beneath a bush. In the morning a sudden squall nearly drove the skiff upon the rocks, but this proved to be the last of our adventures, and at about 4 o'clock we rounded the point and saw the settlement of Nain.

The moment our boat was sighted from the wharf it was greeted with the cries from the station, and when we went ashore the news soon spread among the Eskimo that we had crossed to the George River. Almost the whole population gathered on the wharf to stare at

us and our belongings. The Eskimo have, perhaps, a primitive, but certainly an undoubted sense of humour, for our appearance, freakishly bearded and travel-stained, with our hair as long as their own, caused them to roar with laughter. But among the laughter several with whom we were acquainted made very nice speeches of congratulation and welcome.

"*Aksunai! Kuviasukpogut uttileravit kanoenau!*" they said, which being translated means: "May you be strong! We are glad you are back amongst us, having successfully accomplished your desire."

CHAPTER XI.

HEROES OF THE LABRADOR.

All the world over—in Alaska, in Tibet, in Africa, in Nicaragua, in Labrador, in the West Indies, and in many other lands—are set the missionary outposts of the Moravian Church. Their converts outnumber the members of the parent establishment in the proportion of five to one, a record in which this "ancient episcopal sect" stand alone. Their labours reach strange races, whose names are still to the world at large only a whisper in the hush of romance. Tibetans, Eskimos and Indians, hunters, tillers of the soil, shepherds and fishermen, swamp-dwellers and mountaineers, all have been gathered in to the simple and earnest faith of the Moravian Brethren, who, starting from Hernhutt, in Saxony, have gained the goodwill and help of the Churches of so many countries.

Yet few really know or understand the work the Moravians are doing. At the conclusion of close upon 200 years of missionary effort they remain unadvertised to the general public, and even to their co-workers in Christ almost unknown!—so much so that if you ask many a minister of other Churches "Who are the Moravians?" he will answer: "They are a missionary Church of German origin. I believe they do an immense amount of good." But where or how the good is being done he is often utterly unable to tell you.

As these missionaries never advertise themselves, the very word "Moravian" rarely finds its way into the newspapers; when it does it is generally in connection with the notice of the return of some explorer "who is at present recruiting at the Moravian mission-station at Leh, in Tibet," or, "who touched at the Moravian settlement of Killinek, near Cape Chidley, before proceeding on his interesting voyage to Cape Wolstenholme." For far and wide on the shores of the sea of heathenism are set these lighthouses of the Moravian Brethren.

Thus silently and steadily they do the work to which they have been called—the extent and scope of which they alone know. Nowhere is this work more interesting than on the Labrador, where at the six stations scattered over some 500 miles of a coast, bitterly barren, they live a life hardly to be matched in modern times.

I will touch but shortly on the history of the Labrador Mission, as, however interesting events of the past may be, the events of the present, which are happening to-day, must, in the nature of things, be more interesting still.

In 1750 a Moravian, named Erhardt, having visited a successful Moravian settlement in Greenland, petitioned his bishop to be allowed to found a similar one on the Labrador. In his letter he writes: "I have also an amazing affection for these countries, Indians and other barbarians; and it would be a source of the greatest joy if the Saviour would discover to me that He has chosen me, and would make me fit for His service." The end showed that John Erhardt, though not chosen for service, was given the higher glory of martyrdom. Two years later he landed, with four other Brethren, and

Rev. W. W. Perrett, Housefather of Nain.

Rev. B. Lenz, Housefather of Hopedale.

some of the ship's crew, near the present site of Nain, or, as some maintain, at Ford's Harbour, and, after building a house for the mission, was treacherously murdered with six companions by the hitherto apparently friendly Eskimo.

Indeed, at this time the Eskimo had a villainous reputation, the then Governor of Newfoundland, Admiral Sir Hugh Palliser, in a proclamation, marked them with the brand of Barabbas; he writes "Hitherto the Eskimo have been considered in no other light than as thieves and murderers." In another place he spoke of them as "the most savage race in the whole continent of Ameriea." And it certainly would appear that they richly deserved this reputation, for their acts showed them to be a fierce and treacherous people: they had cruelly slain many a shipwrecked crew, and the fear of them was acknowledged all along the wild shores. Sailors who passed through the Straits of Belleisle told appalling stories of the blood-thirsty doings of the beings who lurked among the rocks and ice of the fiords and islands on the northern side, and unquestionably, many of the stories were true. The Eskimo had lived at war with the Indians for generations, and cruelty and treachery had been bred into their bones.

In fact, there is no room to doubt that at the time of the first Moravian efforts matters had come to a crucial pass; peace or a sword was the alternative which the British Government were forced to lay before the Eskimo. If the mission had not taken the situation in hand, an expedition must have gone in their place, and the Eskimo, instead of being converted to gentler ways by teaching and example, would have been forced to learn their value by musket and cutlass. For the tribes

were becoming a menace to the expansion of the fishing industry in the north ; though it must be admitted that they had only returned treachery by treachery. The early voyagers to the Labrador, as elsewhere, certainly treated the natives abominably. But adventurers never, and the powers behind them rarely, make any allowances for the savage ; and we can conceive that Sir Hugh Palliser, whose attitude was always one of encouragement towards the Moravians, embodied in that policy the intention of giving the Eskimo a last chance before writing him down as incorrigible. And of course it is certain that incorrigible races of savages who retard the advance of men so-called civilised, are inevitably doomed.

In no wise deterred by the fate of Erhardt and his companions, within a few years another devoted missionary pioneer, Jens Haven, having prepared himself for the special work by acquiring the Greenland dialect of the Eskimo tongue, set out for the Labrador. It is interesting to learn that the famous Captain Cook, who was at that time engaged in the first Admiralty survey of those waters, received him on board of his ship and aided him forward on his travels. The Labrador was not easy of access in those days, but at length Haven met with the Eskimo ; and landing amongst them alone was accepted as a friend, because, to quote from his own journal :—

> "I called out to him (*an Eskimo*) in Greenlandish. . . . He was astonished at my speech and answered in broken French ; but I begged him to speak in his own language, which I understood, and to bring his countrymen as I wished to speak to them also ; on which he went to them and cried with a loud voice 'Our friend is come.'"

Thus in due course of time the Mission was established. And here comes the point I would make—that from the

very outset, the Mission has stood between this people and partial if not entire annihilation. In 1773, we find a naval officer who had been sent to Nain to report on the Mission, writing:—"By means of this laudable Society, a herd of barbarous savages are in a fair way to become useful subjects." Of the missionaries, he declares: "Shielded by virtue, they find the protection of arms unnecessary." Such was the first service rendered to the Eskimo by the Moravians. Slowly the savages became tamed; and war, cruelty, and murderous reprisals passed away for ever from the Labrador. It is to-day, thanks to the Moravians and the Deep-Sea Mission, the most God-fearing coast the writer has ever visited.

Then followed halcyon days; but as the years went on, the Brethren had to face a more insidious enemy of their people than war could have been. Fishermen and traders began to push further up the coast, and the evil influences which civilisation of any kind carries with it threatened the settlements. Once more, the Missionaries arose to save the Eskimo. They demanded grants of land in the vicinity of their stations. This request was looked upon with immense and idiotic suspicion, but the Society stood firm, and finally gained the day. The plea put forward by the Moravian historian Hutton ("History of the Moravian Church," Moravian Publication Office, 32 Fetter Lane) on this question is so conclusive that I reproduce it below.

> "It would be better to leave them (*the Eskimo*) ignorant of the Gospel than that by means of spirituous liquors, quarrels, brutal lusts, or bad neighbourhood, they should draw back from the Gospel. The only way to prevent quarrelling and violence would be to grant us absolute property in the land upon which none should be allowed to stay except on good behaviour."

From Haven's time to the present day the work has not been allowed to languish. And now, all along the bleak and forbidding coasts of northerly Labrador, the traveller, on rounding some barren headland, or after threading a hundred miles of narrow channels between a maze of islands and the sea, comes upon a Moravian station built among the rocks of some little bay, lipped by the Arctic current and backed by huge bluffs. A wooden church with a pointed spire; a long dwelling house, two stories high, mostly white-faced and red roofed, for the Brethren, their wives and children: and gathered about this nucleus a scattering of Eskimo huts, which grow ever ruder in build and material the nearer one advances towards the Pole, make up the scene which meets the eye.

The three southerly stations, Makkovik, Hopedale, and Nain, are framed during the brief summer in a hundred vivid hues of luxuriant mosses, and in stunted, hard-grown woods of spruce and juniper; but Okak with its church and hospital lies exposed under dark mountains with little relief of vegetation; Hebron is beyond the timber limit, as is also, of course, the most northerly of all the stations, Killinek. This last settlement of the Moravian Brethren is, in spite of its neat church, mission-house, and store, a dreary spot with an average temperature well below freezing point: a very home of clouds, squalls and sunless days. The buildings seem tossed down at random in the mouth of a deep gully of naked rocks. Yet the spot is the resort of numbers of Eskimo, many of them heathens, who find it a good fishing place for walrus, white whale, and seal.

The natives at Killinek have a superstition that death or any calamity is foretold by the appearance of the

Eskimo Band at Nain.

New Church built by Missionaries and Eskimo at Nain.

Blood-bird, as they call it. When three brothers died up there some few years ago, the Eskimo assured Mr. Perrett—the Moravian Brother who was in charge at the time—that they had seen the bird flying across the Bay. One can sympathise with the imagination of crimson wings hovering in the dim light over the waters between those ice-clad shores.

Killinek is the last founded settlement of the Moravian Brethren; but they had there a predecessor, the Rev. Mr. Stewart, of the Colonial and Continental Missions, of whom I shall have a few words to say later.

At each of the Moravian stations there is a missionary, the House-father, as he is called, with his wife and young children; and if the number of the Eskimo make it necessary, a second ordained assistant; also, except at Makkovik (where there are few people), a storekeeper, who is a layman, attends to the industrial business of the store. The trade done in this way by the Mission is of great value to the Eskimo, though to the missionaries themselves it brings many a troublesome hour. Then why, it has been asked, should sale and barter be connected with the salvation of souls? That any thinking man or woman could ask such a question argues entire ignorance of the country, its inhabitants, and the conditions under which they live. The settlers and Eskimo bring their fish, furs, seal-skin boots, or other articles of barter many miles by sea or sledge to the Mission store, and can there provide themselves with barrels of salt, different kinds of necessary gear for fishing or hunting as may be, provisions, garments, in fact all the supplies that they need. If the Missions possessed no stores, these same people would be obliged to go perhaps double or treble the distance to

some private trader, with the added temptation of finding it possible to buy undesirable things.

The Eskimo is, of course, an absolutely free agent and can trade where he pleases, no pressure whatever being put upon him. Even in extreme cases where a man who is heavily in debt to the Mission store, takes his fur or fish to some outside trader, no word is said to hinder his doing so. Yet, during the winter, that same individual and his family may—indeed, invariably do—become chargeable upon the Mission funds. For the Eskimo is a far from thrifty person.

The prices paid by the Mission are fair and liberal, and in the case of valuable pelts such as silver and black fox, the Mission storekeeper pays a deposit at once, and when the skin has been disposed of in the London market, he passes over the whole amount of the sum obtained, after the deduction of a small percentage, to the hunter. But the possession of a round sum of money is of no permanent use to the Eskimo. He knows nothing of a bank account, and as long as he has a cent he spends it—not by any means at the Mission store, but probably in making many useless and worse than useless purchases from the schooner-men who come in summer to trade along the coast. Thus, a man who has perhaps drawn 300 to 600 dollars in one haul, often applies to the Mission funds as a starving pauper two or three months later. It must be remembered that the Mission, from the very nature of their calling, undertake to feed the poor, to aid those who are sick or helpless, as well as to teach them the Way of Life. Thus their trade always assumes the aspect of the game "Heads you win, tails I lose." Theoretically, there should be no bad debts, and the

store should pay its way if no more; but unless the dictum of Ruskin which would empower the wise minority to compel the foolish majority comes into force throughout the world, that happy state of things is not even remotely in prospect.

Furthermore, throughout the year the Mission provides work for most of the people, and the rate of wages is certainly in excess of that at which passing ships value their aid. The scale runs from 40 to 50 cents per day for a man and 25 to 35 cents for a woman.

As a matter of fact the Eskimo is not usually an enthusiastic worker. Dr. Grenfell, of the Deep Sea Mission, in his book on the Labrador, says: "They (*the Eskimo*) are not able to persevere. Regular work is certainly not to their taste." I paid the Eskimo I hired to accompany my party into the interior, at a rate of one dollar-fifty a day. This man came to me at the end of a week, as I have narrated in another chapter, and demanded a rise in wage. Not receiving it, he decamped, preferring the gamble of the cod-fishing season, during which he could daily choose to work or idle as he liked.

There is no doubt that the trade holds the Eskimo together, and to a great degree prevents their getting into bad hands. The missionaries never sell anything on their own behalf; the rules of the Society forbid it. For instance, when I wished to add to my stock of fish-hooks and flies and asked a brother who had a small supply to allow me to purchase some from him, he could only say "Take what you want," but he would receive no payment whatever. The Mission trade is undertaken purely in the interest of the Eskimo. Without its supplies, the conditions of life in the Labrador would

bring about the inevitable—the Eskimo, forced to become the dependants of the few stores which exist at immense intervals on the coast, would crowd together in their vicinity; the most insanitary conditions would result: in a bad season disease and starvation would fasten upon the close-herded families, with the natural outcome of a generation of misery followed by final extinction.

And then you must not imagine the missionaries to be merely preachers and men of sanctified life. That they are, but in addition every one of them is master of some useful trade or handicraft. Mr. Jannasch, whom I met on my first visit in 1903, was a builder of boats and dwellings; Dr. Hettasch has studied medicine; Bishop Martin is a gardener and architect; others are skilled in carpentry, tailoring, baking and mechanics. They can mend a motor-launch, fashion a boat, indeed turn their hands to most things with success.

Only last year a new church was consecrated at Nain, of which the architects and builders were the resident Brethren, Bishop Martin and Mr. Perrett, assisted by Mr. Schmitt, the superintendent of all Moravian stores upon the coast. Most of the material was brought down by the *Harmony* during the previous season from Zoar, a settlement that has been abandoned. A carpenter from Newfoundland came up to help them for a few weeks, but beyond that they had no skilled assistance. The Eskimo were quite willing to lend a hand; they hauled stones from the beach for the foundation and carried the timbers from the wharf, but after that there was little they could do. A photograph of the church speaks for itself as to the capabilities of its constructors.

Snow-hut Camp of Moravian Missionaries on a journey.

The missionaries are to a great extent self-supporting; they catch and salt or preserve sea-trout and cod, can bear-meat and deer-meat which they buy from the Eskimo or the settlers, besides shooting birds for the same purpose. And all this is done most efficiently. There is not much waste of time among the Moravians. Their wives, the Moravian Sisters, not only help in the schools and teach the women to clean, cook, and do various kinds of work; but they tend the sick, not shrinking from the dressing of ghastly wounds or from nursing those suffering from loathsome imported—mark that *imported*—disease. And it must be remembered these ladies have busy days, for the attainments of the Eskimo servant are of the most limited kind. But for all that, they are ready to forego restful evenings and to join with their husbands in teaching the settlers' children when the work of the day is over.

And it must not be forgotten that this life of devotion and exile has but few breaks, the missionaries returning to visit their homes in England or in Germany on an average only once in about ten years—unless, of course, in the rare cases of sick leave. The salaries paid to the Brothers used to range from £15 to £17 per annum; but this has now been somewhat increased owing to alterations in the routine life of the Mission-houses, whereby the parent Society sends out less provision at its own cost, but permits each family to order and enables it to pay for its own share.

The Sisters, with the exception of one unmarried lady who is nurse in the hospital at Okak, receive no return for their many labours; though undoubtedly the life is far more trying for them than for their husbands. To begin with, their children must be

sent home to the Mission schools at seven years of age. No one who has witnessed these partings can ever forget them; they often mean the practical separation of parents and children for a life-time—for after ten years of absence, how can father or mother hope to find their old place in their child's love and confidence? Moreover, even communication with home is restricted at most of the stations to one or two mails a year.

These noble ladies bear their children and tend them through illnesses usually without medical aid, doctors' visits being few and never to be counted upon. Dr. Grenfell, who is looked for and welcomed at the settlements, goes north generally once a year, usually as far as Nain or Okak, and he places his medical knowledge at the service of white and Eskimo alike. The depth of winter brings another Deep Sea doctor by dog-sledge, and the Moravians have usually a doctor of their own on the coast, who makes his headquarters at Okak, where the Moravian hospital is situated. But when it is borne in mind that the coast line of the Labrador means some 600 miles of deeply indented fiords, and if these distances as well as the difficulties of travel, whether by trap-boat in summer or among the frosts and snows of winter, be even faintly realised, it will be understood how much the Moravian ladies are thrown upon their own resources at times of the gravest and most sickening anxiety.

Nor must the large amount of physical suffering be overlooked. Chloroform is often absent when it is most needed, and of course there are many cases in which patients must wait for weeks, or it may be months, before help or alleviation can arrive. Think of the high

courage demanded of the women who undertake that life! And it cannot be said that they undertake it blindfold, for the daughters of missionaries born on the Labrador return in later life to join in the work there. As an instance, I may mention Mrs. Lenz, of Hopedale, who is a daughter of Mr. Jannasch.

Epidemics attack the settlements in a wholesale fashion, probably because the Eskimo shut themselves up in their huts for the sake of warmth, and have but a poor opinion of the uses of ventilation. During a period of influenza, the whole population of a station seem to catch it at the same time ; the paths about the village and the beach and wharf are practically empty and deserted—only now and then a muffled and dismal figure moves along to the Mission-house to ask for treatment and medicine from the House-father. Most of the Brethren have more or less medical knowledge of simple ailments and doctor their people when necessary.

The severity of the climate falls most heavily on the women. During the months of snow the missionaries travel many scores of miles by *komatik* to visit the outlying settlers and Eskimo, and they have also to superintend such outdoor work as the weather permits. But their wives must fulfil their duties in the close and stove-warmed houses, and though some of the Sisters are energetic enough to take long walks in the crisp snow, others are unable or unwilling to make the effort.

The effect of the Labrador life is even more marked among the settler women. In the north at any rate, nearly all the men are athletic-looking, wiry, and strong, and they spend the greater part of their time fishing, hunting and trapping. The young girls have the same appearance of health and activity, but when they grow

a little older the cares of a household tell quickly on them and they soon lose their air of vigour. For the tasks in the settlers' homes are very arduous. In addition to cooking, house-work, and looking after the children, there are seal skins to scrape and clean, and afterwards make into the long boots that are, as I have said, the currency of the country. And all this hard labour goes on for months in the hot and exhausted atmosphere of their houses.

The children are hardy little folk, and play a good deal in the open air whatever the season may be.

But in spite of the cold, many, indeed most of the Moravian ladies prefer winter to summer; for though the summer brings a certain amount of warmth, it also awakens the curse of the Labrador, the innumerable mosquitoes and black flies, which makes sitting out of doors quite impossible; for the swarms gather and intolerably harass the unfortunate human being who stands still even for a moment. Walking when enveloped in a veil thick enough to keep out the tiny wriggling black fly, cannot be accounted among the pleasures of life. Thus the long and lovely summer evenings, steeped in the pure intense colours that belong to the earth and sky of the Labrador, can seldom be fully enjoyed, for the flies are always present. A smut in the eye will destroy for the loftiest artistic nature all delight in the most beautiful view in the world, and the Labrador mosquito is far more destructive of appreciation than any smut.

One story which the traveller is always told of the Moravians, touching the marriages between the young missionaries and brides whom they have never seen, but who are chosen for them by the Committee in Hernhutt or England, has in it only a small share of truth. It

used to be a fact that if a missionary in a remote spot desired to be married—and all must marry within a certain time of entering upon their ministry—he wrote home to that effect, and his letter was read aloud in the Moravian Church of the locality where he had been brought up, and where, therefore, not only was he well known, but he himself was acquainted with most of the girl members of that congregation. Consequently, the chances were that the young woman who accepted the offer and her future husband were not altogether strangers to each other. Nowadays, however, the young men invariably come home and choose for themselves. But I heard it said by one who knew, that the arranged marriages were in the bulk as happy as, if not happier than, those resulting from personal selection in more favoured climes.

To live among savage rocks, enduring bitter winter cold, the long bleakness of spring, the pest of mosquitoes and flies which destroy the pleasure of summer; to remain cut off from the world for the greater part of the year, visited, as in Killinek, by but one ship annually; to give of strength and time generously to the ignorant and the ailing; to remain far from home and children for intervals of ten to fifteen years until the memory of the father-lands must surely be as a dream; to meet with ingratitude and—still worse—with misrepresentation; such are heavy crosses. But all these things count as nothing, all are included in the splendid self-sacrifice of the missionary life. Can any other show a finer record?

There is a side of missionary life of which we, in the midst of the thousand distractions of ordinary existence, take little count; and yet it is a side that must loom

large in these uttermost parts of the earth. I allude to the many disappointments and discouragements that inevitably accompany any such heart-whole effort as that which I am trying to describe. Such hours of discouragement they must know; yet one finds out there a cheery community, seeing much in life to content them, losing themselves in the absorbing interest of their work, and ever ready with sympathy for the shortcomings and sorrows of their people.

Many of the brethren and sisters lie buried in the graveyards under the bare bluffs of the coast, a row of white wooden squares bearing on one side of the separating path the names of the men, and on the other those of the women who have died at their post. For the rigid separation of the sexes in their quiet church services lasts beyond the end of life, and in their graves mothers and sons, wives and husbands, lie apart, while dust returns to dust.

Before I close this chapter I must add a few words about the Rev. S. M. Stewart, of the Colonial and Continental Missions, who is at present working in the most remote districts of the Labrador. He spent some years at Killinek, and later moved on to Chimo, in Ungava Bay, where he has a small house near the Hudson Bay Company's post, but he is seldom in residence. Every year he travels over a thousand miles round the eastern and western shores of Ungava Bay, following his nomadic parishioners, the Eskimo, who are for the most part still heathens, or paying visits to groups of families that have made a settled camp for a short time. He also occasionally meets with Indian tribes from the far interior, when they travel out to barter at the Hudson's Bay post.

One would imagine that an existence, led under such conditions which indeed mean constant real discomfort and loneliness in an unsparing climate, could not hold many attractions; but when I met Mr. Stewart at Nain, on his way from a short leave in England back to Ungava, his eagerness to be again upon the scene of his labours was evident.

Any mention of the Labrador from this point of view would not be complete without including the name of Dr. Grenfell. His many years of varied work in connection with the Deep Sea Mission, and, indeed, in connection with much of the coast life, are widely known, and I will speak only of that part of it of which I myself have knowledge. He usually sails north once or twice during the summer months, and his arrival in Nain or Hopedale is welcomed by many a sufferer. When he goes ashore he spends most of his time passing from one house to another visiting the sick in need of his skill—and there are always many. Further, he sometimes takes the sufferers in his steam launch to the Moravian hospital at Okak, where they can receive the trained nursing required. To his direct labours in the cause of the Deep Sea Mission may be added those innumerable acts of kindness and of help which makes the appearance of the *Strathcona* a source of thankfulness and joy in many a lonely harbour.

I have dwelt upon the Moravian Mission because they belong more particularly to the Labrador, passing both summer and the protracted winter upon its shores. Like the race for whom they care, they have no other home, and I think it is impossible not to feel the glory and the pathos of the gentle courage which, for so many generations, has endured to stand between the Eskimo and destruction.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ESKIMO.

The Eskimo are a people in many points unique. They are, perhaps, the most widely-distributed race in the world, for they can be found over thousands of miles of ice-bound coast, maintaining themselves under the most rigorous conditions of climate in a manner no other breed on earth has equalled.

Their very environment, savagely inclement, has set them aloof from all other peoples; yet they have passed down through the centuries healthy and vigorous, inured to extraordinary hardships, and only failing when they come into touch with civilisation. All along the shores of the American continent they use the same language, possess the like customs, and hunt the same quarry with identical weapons, and have done so since before the memory of history. Yet, as the cold of those regions drives asunder the particles of ice, so has it driven asunder the Eskimo nation into small communities, forcing them into groups and families, scattered by the exigencies of finding a living in so bleak a land. Nevertheless, it has not defeated them; they hold their own strongly, and are, in fact, the only permanent conquerors of the Arctic.

My interest in them dates from a certain Christmas-time some twenty years ago. Fridtjof Nansen had just published his "First Crossing of Greenland," a work which is furnished with a wealth of detail concerning

the lives of this hunter people. I was at home from school for the holidays, and one morning, walking through the town near which we lived, I was attracted by a picture in a book laid open in the window of the leading bookseller. This picture, which has its place about the middle of the second volume, represents an Eskimo, in a skin *kayak*, throwing his harpoon at a whale. An iceberg in the background, the strange shape of the Eskimo, the seal, the *kayak*, and, more than all, the huge bladder-float, appealed with irresistible strength to my imagination. Were I writing fiction I would go on to describe how I hoarded my pocket-money and ultimately bought the book. As a matter of fact, I did nothing of the kind, but followed the easier and more ignoble course of having the name placed upon the library list. In due time it came, and I fell completely under the spell of one of the finest works of travel ever written. And I never forgot the Eskimo, and often dreamed of visiting them.

But the wish was not accomplished until an evening in 1903, when I at length found myself on board the *Virginia Lake*, steaming along the coast of Labrador, down a long *tickle*, or strait, shut in by cliffs. As the ship rounded a headland we perceived some dark figures squatting over a fire of wreckage built at the base of a huge cliff. They rose from their haunches, and uttered in unison a mournful cry, and fired off their guns; they generally greet the appearance of an alien vessel in this way. It was my first sight of the Eskimo, or Huskimaw, as the Newfoundland fisher calls him.

However kindly their present character, in former times, as has been said in the last chapter, the Eskimo were a fierce and treacherous people, who, by a show of

much friendliness, would entice the men from the fishing vessels to come ashore, and, later, attack and massacre them with merciless ferocity. It is beyond question that the race in those days would have engaged in savage reprisals with white expeditions—to their own undoing, had not the Moravian Brethren stepped into the breach and saved them from themselves. The missionaries not only tamed them; but, having done so much, they further stood between their converts and another, and greater, menace than the weapons of the armed white invader, when the tide of immigration swept up the coast, bringing with it many of the evils of the outer world.

The missionaries recognised the danger, and endeavoured to keep the Eskimo to the mode of life and the food which had sufficed them for centuries—since the times, indeed, when the Skraelings or Skraelingers (the name that the old Norse voyagers gave to the Eskimo) first saw white faces in Greenland—and which they knew would give them the better chance of ultimate survival. But civilisation is insidious. Putting aside the question of strong drink, the Eskimo learned to love coffee, flour, tobacco; and none of these things are really good for his particular constitution, which seems to call for the blubber, the walrus head and seal that he loved to gorge upon in earlier days, when if he could obtain neither seal nor walrus he and his went hungry.

There were then no drones in any Eskimo hive. Hunger and the pressure of public opinion in an Arctic environment kills that side of Socialism which finds its sole issue in talk. Socialism there translates its doctrines into work and action. The true Socialist is the hunter who tows ashore a mighty walrus bull, and so by his labour enables the community to continue to exist.

A successful White Whale Hunt.

Breakfast at a Summer Camp.

In those days the Eskimo round of life was simple and healthy. They occasionally slew deer, but they depended upon the sea for the chief means of sustenance. Their lives held but one problem—how to obtain a sufficient supply of bear, walrus, seal and fish to enable them to keep on the hither side of starvation, to provide material for their clothes and their summer tents. Life was a struggle—hard and bitter, it is true; yet death presented himself to them under few forms. Hunger was one, accident—and accidents at sea in the *kayaks* or boats of skin were common—was another. Sometimes, no doubt, death wore the face of disease, but the ailments known amongst them in their primitive state were few in number.

It is rather surprising to find that the Eskimo are far from looking up to the white man. In the early days of meeting with Europeans, he called them "*Kablunaet*," "Sons of dogs"; if you contrast this with his name for his own folk, "Innuit," which, being interpreted, means "Men," you will comprehend that the Eskimo mind is far from flattering to Outlanders. They are apt as a people to value themselves on their own greater powers. One can imagine an Eskimo saying to himself "I am not as those white men are. I am glad of the shape of my body which can endure cold better than theirs, travel under harder conditions and for longer distances. Also I can handle a *kayak* and slay a seal more skilfully than they, and I am able to gather in the harvest of the sea with at least as much success." All of which is true; the Eskimo is exceedingly hard to beat on his own ground.

The tremendous forces of nature bearing upon him through so many generations have perhaps altered his

physique to suit his surroundings; or it may be that he was always, as he is to-day, fitted to live the harsh life from the beginning: for he is said in his physical attributes to show a remarkable similarity to the cave man.

Some decades ago the Eskimo of the Labrador coast was of a tougher fibre than he is now. That was before certain of the people, against the advice and indeed the entreaties of the Moravian missionaries, permitted themselves to be taken as exhibits to the Chicago and other exhibitions. They brought back with them typhoid and diphtheria, besides other diseases all peculiarly fatal to wilderness organisations. Nature is confessedly cruel to the wild peoples, but civilisation is infinitely more so. Before her advance wild game and wild tribes vanish away as a lake mist vanishes under the coming of the sun.

If ever a policy in the world's history has been proved correct, that of the Moravian Brethren in wishing to keep the Eskimo to their old customs has been justified by events, for as civilisation advances up the coast —outside the limit of Mission influence—the Eskimo race dies out and disappears. Formerly many of them were to be found on the southern shore of Labrador, but now there are few or none. Makkovik, the first Mission station going north, is chiefly inhabited by half-breeds and settlers; at the next, Hopedale, the numbers of Eskimo are dwindling. At Nain, 120 miles nearer the Pole, the death and birth rates balance each other. In the still more northerly posts of Okak and Hebron, a hardier breed face the struggle of life with success; and at Killinek, near Cape Chidley, the old methods and the old life hold their own as they do all over the vast snow-fields of the ultimate north.

In Killinek, where the people are just emerging from the wild state, they rarely wear other than skin garments. A tunic and trousers of sealskin and long sealskin boots comprise their protection against the coldest weather, and their babies are carried mostly quite naked in the long pointed hoods of their mothers' fur *attijeks*, as the upper garments are called. And no special ill effects seem to result.

It is a well-proven fact that civilised foods are not only unsuitable to the Eskimo, but actually sow the seeds of weakness and disease. Nor are civilised clothes, the product of European looms, adapted to the climate; but in the southerly settlements, both store food and store clothes are gaining in popularity—partly because the skin tunic and trousers are regarded as old-fashioned, and, no doubt, because store garments are so much easier to obtain.

Now as to the introduction of the rifle, which has long been the recognised weapon of the coast. The Eskimo are good shots, and at first sight it would appear as if in this direction, at all events, they have received a benefit from civilisation's clanging workshops. But on looking closer, such a conclusion is open to doubt.

Consider the facts. In the old days, when the sealer harpooned his quarry, he rarely, or comparatively rarely, lost a stricken beast. But with the rifle many more are killed and a good many lost, for the carcass sometimes sinks almost immediately, and the hunter often fails to reach his beast before the sea swallows it up. It will be seen, therefore, that for obvious reasons the supply is decreasing, and all game becoming wilder. Walrus are very seldom seen now, except in very northern waters, and the seals are far more wide-awake off

he Labrador coast than off our own. Again and again when a seal had seen me, I found it difficult, sometimes impossible, to approach within 300 yards; whereas, off the Scottish and Irish coasts I have often got within ordinary camera range. Fifty years ago, this would have been easy enough in the channels of the Peninsula.

It is a familiar saying that the wealth of a people cannot be computed by their riches alone, but rather by the nature of their wants and their ability to supply them. Let us apply this test to the Eskimo. What does the Eskimo need? Very many things to-day—some good, some bad. But in the years gone by, his wants approached the irreducible minimum. Flesh to eat; skins for garments, tents and boat coverings; wood for paddles, for the framework of boats, for hafts of weapons; seal oil for light; and soapstone for cooking vessels. These composed the necessaries of existence, and he evolved them all from his environment.

And he still in the main supplies his needs from the products of the chase. The Eskimo year is passed thus: In the spring the hunters kill seal, and, in the north, white whale and walrus; in the summer they fish for cod and trout; in the autumn they once more turn their attention to the seal hunting. Throughout the winter they trap, and just before the advent of spring, while the snow is still sound, they make long journeys after the deer by *komatik* or dog-sledge.

The Eskimo is a good hunter in a deliberate, methodical way of his own. He is also courageous. I will illustrate this with an account of an event which happened a couple of years ago north of Nain. An Eskimo hunter had gone out to shoot ptarmigan, guillemot and divers, when he came suddenly upon a large Polar bear. He had no

ball cartridge, but he at once advanced to the attack with his shot-gun, and, approaching the bear, fired a charge of No. 6 full into its face. Now comes the extraordinary part of the incident. The gun was a muzzle loader, and though the Eskimo had of intention blinded the bear, the brute at once winded him and charged fiercely. The hunter tore off his outer garment and flung it to the infuriated animal, and while the bear was occupied in rending it to pieces, reloaded his gun and fired a second charge into the bear's head, and so eventually succeeded in killing the most formidable of Arctic animals at close quarters.

The Eskimo is not only a good and persevering hunter, but he is also a man of no small intelligence. All those at the Moravian settlements are fairly educated, very few indeed being unable to read and write. In this they are far ahead of many of the white settlers of Southern Labrador, and even of a large proportion of the population in some of the Newfoundland outports. About the Moravian stations the settlers share in all the benefits of the Mission. During winter-time the boys and girls from distant bays and islands are sent to Nain or to Hopedale, where they are boarded out with responsible families and attend evening school under the superintendence of the missionaries and their wives. The good results of this teaching are not far to seek, and it is a pleasure to meet the kindly well-spoken men and women who come in to the stations from time to time from outlying fjords. In fact, most of the families have nice, neatly built "town-houses," their quarter being on one side of the Mission house and church, while the Eskimo dwellings stand, as usual, a good deal too close together upon the other.

During the summer the settlements are almost deserted, as a large proportion of the able-bodied inhabitants are away at their fishing camps; but the Eskimo generally return to the neighbourhood of the Missions for the winter. They delight in the church services and are very regular in their attendance, a baptism specially seeming to appeal to all the Eskimo within reach. The organist is very often a native man or woman, and an Eskimo "chapel-servant" or elder frequently leads the service, and can invariably preach and pray with vigour and fluency. The settlers, most of whom have their homes at their fishing stations in the bays or on the islands, come in chiefly for the Church festivals.

The scene on a Sunday is interesting. The churches are very simple: a platform and desk is occupied by the minister, and the congregation sit, the men on the right, the women on the left, in the severe division I have already noted. Very small children are brought to the services, as the mothers cannot leave them at home; and they behave, as a rule, with quite extraordinary decorum. Everyone is as neat and as smart as circumstances permit. The men with snowy *sillipaks*—the cotton covering for the hooded blanket *attijek*—and the white square-flipper soles of their high sealskin boots carefully cleaned, while the boys mostly affect bright coloured jerseys. Many of the girls favour the demure three-cornered Moravian cap of net with a bow and strings of coloured ribbon.

They are fond of music, and will, if they are given the smallest encouragement, indulge strenuously in Salvation Army or Moody and Sankey hymns, translated into their own language by the missionaries. At Nain there

Christian Eskimo Woman.

Heathen Eskimo Woman.

is a quite excellent brass band which played at the consecration of the church and added much to the general sense of rejoicing. A number of the people can play the harmonium, and they all delight in owning gramophones, for as many as can afford such a luxury purchase them.

They sing heartily at their church services, which open with a hymn, sung seated. At the end of each line there is a pause; at the beginning of the next, the organist strikes the note first, then he strikes it a second time, whereupon the people chime in. This pause and the double notes are repeated at every line: it is purely an Eskimo custom, but somehow suits the leisurely and rather Gregorian music which the Mission has brought with it from the place of its birth. One of my companions made a considerable impression by the beauty of his singing. Following the hymn, the congregation stand up for prayer and Bible reading, after which comes the sermon, hymn, and blessing. The services are short, lasting about half-an-hour, and while they are going on one can see through the church windows the dogs prowling like stealthy wolves about the hill-sides.

A burial at a station is a strange and impressive sight. I can remember one at Nain. After a brief service in the church—a hymn, a kind of liturgy and a prayer—we filed out to the little mortuary close by; for the dead are not taken into the church. From there we started in a procession towards the cemetery. The coffin went first, women helping to balance and carry it on a *komatik*. The Bishop and another Moravian Brother followed immediately behind, and after them the people.

Arrived at the cemetery by the bluff, the Bishop read the service, the people responding sonorously; then the coffin was lowered to the sound of soft staccato singing, while the evening shadows stretched slowly out across the grave-yard under its high green bluff, and far below the picket-fence the pale sea shone. Black headlands frowned at us across the Bay, but beyond them the heights of Paul's Island burned ruby-red in the level sunlight. All was wonderfully still and beautiful and sad.

If an Eskimo dies while the family are away at their fishing grounds, the corpse is buried on the island or on the shore of the bay wherever the camp may be. A grave is dug and lined if possible with bark, and a cairn of stones is piled over it.

It would not appear that the Eskimo are a long-lived race, for, except in the case of quite youthful couples, one finds that one or other partner—and not infrequently both—in the older marriages has been married before.

Civilised ailments levy a very heavy tribute on the race. Moreover, in such a land accidents of flood or field must be taken into account; but although the Eskimo appear to die quite easily of imported diseases, they recover from frightful injuries: a fact which is true of all peoples outside the civilised area. Yet the relative rarity of the aged is a point which strikes the stranger; a really old person is seldom to be seen.

Widowers are readily consoled in these latitudes, and the men very reluctantly wait the six weeks insisted upon by the missionaries before they marry again. But they have this excuse, that their need for help in their homes is almost imperative. A wife takes her full share in the domestic economy; it is she who prepares the sealskins for use, and the toil of softening

An Eskimo Mother.

Eskimo Woman in Winter Costume.

them and rubbing off the hair is far from being light. She also makes the long boots, which may be fairly regarded as the currency of the coast (a pair being equal to about $1.60), and is obliged to thoroughly chew the edges of the sealskin to prepare it for the needle. The teeth of most of the women are in consequence worn almost to the gum. It is further true that when these boots become hard and stiff with wear and salt water, or when they dry too quickly, it is then the wife's horrid duty to chew them back into comfort for the husband's feet.

In the Mission houses they use a cross piece of wood like an inverted ⊥ for this purpose. The arms are held down by the feet and the boots worked firmly by hand upon the upper end until they get supple again; but to the close of the chapter the Eskimo women will use their teeth, for, of the few I questioned, one actually expressed a liking for the taste of sealskin boots.

The round-about Eskimo children are treated with gentleness and affection: they hear few harsh words. The instinct of adoption is very strong among the people on the coast, settlers and Eskimo alike; even where there are children already, one or two extra who have been left orphan or belong to larger families and can presumably be spared, are taken into the household and treated with exactly the same kindness as if they had been born there. It must be said, however, that this desire to adopt is not entirely an unselfish instinct, for when a couple grow old or only one is left, the adopted children are expected to take the place of sons and daughters, and to care for the older people, which indeed they appear to do quite as often and as readily as those bound by ties of blood.

For playthings, the Eskimo children have balls made of the crops of willow-grouse blown out and tied up tightly; usually a few seeds found in the crop are left inside. Babies' rattles are woven of bleached sea-grass with the seeds enclosed. All the boys use bows and arrows, and with them they soon learn to kill small birds and so become good shots later on with the gun. There seem to be no native games among the Eskimo at the present day, though Captain George Cartwright mentions in his book, published in 1792, that the Eskimo were fond of a game of ball, tossing it to one another, and also another game like thread-the-needle. Their only game nowadays is rounders, which was taught them by a missionary, whose name, not inappropriately, was Fry.

Most of the Eskimo return to the Mission settlements when the summer fishing closes, but a few of them remain away at their camps till near Christmas, when they can return with their dogs over the sea-ice, which is always thick and strong some weeks earlier.

It chanced that the winter of 1909 and 1910 was a very mild season, and the ice continued to be very thin right up to Christmas. It was consequently not easy for the people to return to Nain, but all managed to do so with the exception of one man, who with his wife and three children had spent the summer on an island some fifteen miles to the south. They waited on from day to day, hoping the ice would become strong enough to bear; their provisions were fast disappearing, and the man made several attempts in his flat to break through the thin ice, and so reach the mainland. But each time he could only succeed in going a part of the way. Finally the family were obliged to kill the three husky puppies they had

taken with them to camp, and they lived on the meat as long as it lasted. At length only the head and heart of the last puppy remained, so the man made up his mind to set out and try to walk to Nain over the treacherous ice. He succeeded in making his way there, and arrived late on Christmas Day. The station was at once full of excitement, two *komatiks* were made ready with provisions, and started forth to relieve the starving woman and children. All ended well, the rescued family being brought back to Nain safe and sound.

I am here tempted to tell another anecdote illustrative of the life of the Eskimo. A well-to-do man, who has a good house at one of the Mission stations, usually spends half the year, from March to the fall, at an island where he has his fishing camp. There he has built a second house, where he lives most comfortably, only coming into the settlement from time to time for stores of one kind or another. This man and his wife have but one child, a son, who, at the time of which I am writing, was about twenty years old. As I have said before, the work of the women on the Labrador is exceedingly hard, and the wife, who was getting on in years, felt she would like to have a younger woman with her to help in scraping and preparing the sealskins. The shortest and most certain way to secure this help lay in obtaining a wife for her son. She imparted her wishes to her husband, who fell in with them at once. As for the young man himself, it does not appear that he was in the least anxious for marriage ; but that was a small matter, and he consented with casual good humour to the arrangement. Proposals were consequently made for the eldest daughter of a large family, who, though they were settlers, had some admixture of blood in their

veins. As there were so many children the parents could not be called prosperous; yet the idea of the marriage, in spite of the prospective bridegroom being, in local estimation, a rich man, was not entertained for a moment; they would not give their daughter to an Eskimo. The father of the young man therefore turned his attention to one of his own race. In this case the lady chosen was away in a situation as nurse-girl down the coast, but her father, charmed with the offer, hurried off in his trap-boat to fetch her home, He brought her away with him, merely telling her she was about to be married, but refused to divulge the name she naturally desired to hear. Rumour has it that she wished to choose for herself, but married she was without more ado, and carried off to the fishing camp, where no doubt her mother-in-law felt the advantage of having someone to share her labours.

The Eskimo of the settlements are, on the whole, a light-hearted community ready with smiles, and when they are working together, unloading cargo for instance, the men and women laugh and joke the whole time — some of the women carrying their load and a small child in the hood of the *attijek* at the same time.

The Mission do not allow intoxicants to be brought in or sold at the stations, but the Eskimo has discovered how to make a kind of beer with molasses and hard biscuit; and though it is not very strong stuff, the Eskimo brain is very inflammable, and the men become very wicked when drunk. For some years past the Mission have been greatly troubled by this manufacture of beer, for, thanks to it, wives are beaten, and various domestic disturbances arise.

Another unfortunate weakness of the Eskimo character is the love of gambling. At one time card-playing went on every night in the huts, though no effort was spared to put a stop to it. But both drink and gambling are now much less prevalent than they were.

A few of the Eskimo are very well off, but I never heard of one who owned a bank account. Yet a certain very industrious man was reported to have considerable riches laid up somewhere; certainly he possessed an extremely comfortable house with lace curtains in the windows. He had visited St. John's, where he had ordered fine furniture, for his sitting-room was adorned with armchairs, rocking-chairs, a piano, and many gim-cracks. He was very good to the poor and to the widows.

But many of the people are exceedingly thriftless, and linger in the settlement long after they should be away at their summer fishing. They can manage to exist quite well at that season, for all of them but the very poorest have trout nets ; besides which they are very generous to each other. The widows are well cared for by the Moravians, who make arrangements by which the older ones can earn a living. The younger women marry without exception. The widows who are widows indeed, become blubber women—that is, they are employed to cut up the seal blubber for the caldrons. Boiling out the oil takes place principally at Nain, where the seals bought by the Mission from the people for this purpose are gathered from the northerly stations. The smell of the boiling yard is strong ; but the women probably enjoy it, for they frequently may be seen going home at the intervals for meals, chewing a lump of blubber with much appreciation as they walk.

For the widows also is reserved the task of cleaning the eiderdown, which comes chiefly from Killinek, near Cape Chidley. It is necessary that the room in which this is done should be very hot, and the women sit to the cleaning frames in the lightest clothing. The frames themselves are oblong, and at each two workers face one another and rub the down back and forth across the slats of the frame until the refuse falls through and the down becomes clean and pure. The old women make sufficient at this work to keep them all the year round.

Labrador life does not tend to fastidiousness. The Eskimo when shopping at the store makes no difficulty of carrying away his purchases—tea, sugar, or flour, or what not—in any portion of his clothing that seems most available. A supply of molasses is, however, not so easy to handle. An Eskimo having bought a quart or two on one occasion, searched himself all over in vain; he could discover nothing to hold it. Saying he would go home and see what he could find there for transport purposes, he disappeared, and presently returned with a very old and highly-scented sealskin boot—these skin boots not being very well cured are redolent at all times —and insisted upon the molasses being poured into it, and when that was done carried off his purchase in triumph.

If a mouse "happens" into the molasses, it is taken out and held up by the tail and licked all over exhaustively that nothing be lost. Certainly, the Eskimo prefer high seal to fresh; and the flesh is often left buried to ripen until the ground above it is spongy to the foot! But this epicurean dish cannot at all times be partaken of with impunity. At Hopedale, some four or five years ago, an ancient dame was presented by a kindly disposed friend with a seal's flipper, which is considered

Entrance to Eskimo House in Winter

a dainty. The flipper was more than mellow, and the old lady invited a certain friend, Jonathan Assa, his wife, and a daughter of thirteen, to feast with her. The supper was thoroughly enjoyed; but the flipper had been permitted to "hang" a little too long, with the consequence that the whole party fell ill. The poor old hostess and the child died of the meal. Jonathan and his wife recovered.

But it is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that fastidiousness is the outcome of artificial conditions of existence, whereas the Eskimo lives very close to nature, and the feeling upon which we civilised folks pride ourselves is fortunately absent from their physical and mental equipment.

The range of ideas that present themselves to the minds of the Eskimo is inevitably narrow. As an instance, I may give one of the difficulties met with by the Moravian Brethren in their translation of the Old Testament. One would imagine it simple enough to present the idea of the patriarchs with their wealth of flocks and herds; but horses, cattle and sheep do not exist on the Labrador; there may be a few individual animals in the south, but there certainly are none on the part of the coast inhabited by the Eskimo. They have, as a matter of fact, no domesticated animals, save the dogs. Thus the missionaries were driven to figure the herds of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob under the guise of seals and fish, interpreting the riches of the earth by the riches of the sea.

But in spite of their limited possibilities, the Eskimo are an intelligent people, and, moreover, possess a physique that must rank high among the diverse developments of mankind, for they have adapted them-

selves and their mode of living to the exigencies of a cruel environment, and their bodily robustness has enabled them to defy the onslaughts of the Arctic cold. Is not this a race well worth preserving?

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WINTER MASTERS OF THE LABRADOR.

By the dogs of Labrador, I do not mean the Labrador dogs so well known to sportsmen, and owned by a few favoured people in Great Britain.

So far *as I know*, not a single representative of this breed exists to-day in Labrador, nor was I able to trace any reasonable tradition concerning their origin there. The only dogs to be found on the coast are the wolf-like huskies, and these have so marked a place in the national life that I must devote a chapter to them.

The Labrador possesses a vast and most intricate coast line, and is over 500,000 square miles in extent, yet the Eskimo or husky dog is for over half the year the master of the inhabited part of the peninsula. He is a wonderful animal, of enormous value as a means of communication between the settlements, which, without him, would be isolated for the greater part of the year.

The husky has been both advertised and extolled in recent fiction. Some of the novels which have been written round him are remarkable on many counts; artistic in treatment and accurate in detail, they appeal very strongly to the imagination. But the obvious necessity of attracting sympathy to the central figure has coloured the portrait. Not many, if any, huskies compel sympathy, or need it. The villainous dog, and the bullying dog, are far more true to the type

than the hero dog. There may be a few of the latter, but men with a life-long knowledge of huskies agree that, however gentle and amenable occasional dogs may appear, they are never really to be relied on, as they seem incapable of losing the innate savagery and treachery which comes to them through their wolf ancestry.

A census of the dogs has never, and probably never will be, taken in Labrador, but the numbers can hardly be computed at less than 5,000 on the Eastern Coast alone. Every settler and every Eskimo has his team more or less numerous—a good team ranges from 9 to 12 dogs—these, with their due proportion of pups, half-grown dogs and so forth, amount to a large total. So that it is possible in winter to travel from Fort Chimo, in Ungava Bay, and following the coast of Labrador, to reach Battle Harbour by stages, picking up a new team and driver every 30 or 50 miles. It may be said that the worldly position of a settler can, up to a certain point, be gauged by the number and condition of his dogs.

Probably the reason why the more well-to-do do not greatly increase their packs is due to the difficulty of finding food for the animals in summer, when the husky dogs do not work, and are consequently, by the Eskimo at any rate, not much regarded. Indeed, at that season, many of the poorer people leave their dogs to find their own subsistence as best they may. The result of this policy is, that the dogs raid the trout nets at low water and steal all they find, often damaging the nets badly. When the caplin visit the coast they catch them on the tide-edge ; at other times they range far and wide inland. The writer has seen them hunting deep in the interior.

Still, game is scarce, and it would be idle to deny that in summer the lot of the husky is a hard one. Few

The Labrador "Sinbad."

No specimen of these magnificent dogs now exists in Northern Labrador.

seals are killed in the warm months, and the most the average dog can expect is, that his master may throw him some fish-offal, sculpin, or, as the Eskimo call them, *kanayuk*, and rock cod, these last not being accounted man-food in the fishing season.

Even in Nain, where boats are continually coming and going to and from the fishing grounds and the dogs consequently pick up a certain amount of food, an instance occurred this year showing the extraordinary summer hunger of the dogs. A large sleeper shark was caught by its tail in one of the trout nets, killed, and hauled on the beach. In an instant about a hundred huskies—all the Nain dogs which were not away with their owners at the fishing stations—had galloped down and sat round with streaming jaws, while a settler and a young Eskimo carefully took out the shark's liver, which consists of two long light yellow lobes, and yields oil of a good quality. When the men left the carcass the dogs gathered closer to the shark in great excitement, but, with the exception of a couple of young puppies that licked up the blood, they sniffed at it gingerly, and most of them went off without attempting to eat it. As a matter of fact the dogs, though they appear to relish the hard spines of the sculpin, will only eat shark's flesh when driven desperate by hunger. In this case, as soon as the big and better-fed dogs lost interest, the off-scourings belonging to the poorer Eskimo came down, and by afternoon, after much howling, bickering, and rending, nothing was left of the carcass but the tail.

It is not too much to say that during the whole summer the majority of the dogs are hungry and in a sense outcast. They drowse in the hot sun through the

July and August days, haunted and tortured by mosquitos and flies of various kinds; when not away hunting, they hang about the wharves and sight the incoming boats even before their masters. The advent of such is the signal for a general assembly; the bigger huskies walk gravely and delicately, as their manner is, to the landing steps, and the gaunt, rough, and often frowsy individuals, hustle together behind, in the hope, usually unfulfilled, that the incoming boat may carry something unfit for human consumption, but welcome as dog-provender.

This trick of meeting boats is an awkward one for the stranger who, making some lonely landing after dark, finds himself confronted by some score of huskies, whose neutrality is never quite to be depended upon.

The settlers usually take their teams to their summer fishing, as do many of the Eskimo, and it is no unusual thing to see a boatload returning for a day or two to the settlement for stores, bringing their dogs with them. Huskies at a fishing camp are generally well-fed, and consequently look sleek, clean, and handsome.

Such then is the existence of the husky in summer; but when the winter snow falls he enters into his kingdom. Then, apart from the snow shoe, the *komatik*, or dog-sledge, is the only means of travel and communication. Then he is fed and looked after and rendered fit to fill his niche in the economy of the Labrador. And it must be put to his credit that the Eskimo dog, whatever his faults, loves his work. When the *komatik* is first drawn from its summer resting place, the huskies bark and leap, half beside themselves with joy. They will toil and die in their traces. From Nain, the settlers often drive out thirty miles

through the vast barrier of islands, to the *sina*, the ice-edge of the open sea, to fish or catch seals for the day, returning the same night. Nor is this distance considered any undue strain upon the team.

There are regular *komatik* routes leading from the coast inland all up the Labrador, which are used by the hunting parties; others lead from bay to bay. The annual winter mail, which reaches Nain about Christmas, sometimes follows these, but much of this great north road leads over the sea-ice, which presents a better surface for travelling. On a clear, still winter's day, no scene more eloquent of the north can be imagined, than the dark moving blots and the humped sledgeload behind them, which, as they approach over the white world, resolve themselves into eight huskies full of the joy of life, and behind them the wind-blackened face and sleepy eyes of the Eskimo driver, who, with his short handled whip, lashed with thirty feet of hide, can, not only touch any dog he pleases, but can flick a fly, drive in a nail, or kill a willow-grouse with a turn of his wrist.

As to distances which husky teams travel, they can continuously draw a light load each day for forty or fifty miles for a week on end. The driver controls the dogs by voice, backed by fear of his whip. If they should break away, as they do sometimes on the scent of game, he is likely to have an awkward time of it. As this is the case, it can readily be imagined how much depends on the character of the leader of the team. A good and steady leader is of immense value. He must start at the cry of "Huit!" stop when his driver shouts "Ah!" turn to the right at "Ra, ra, ra!" and to the left at "Auk, auk, auk!" Added to all this is

the qualification on which fiction has laid so much stress, that the leader, when a male, must be able to lord it over his team, fight any member of it to a finish, and keep order generally.

Curiously enough, in every team besides a leader there is also a scapegoat. This unhappy animal—often an ex-leader, who at the fangs of a younger, lustier brute has learned the bitter lesson of life that "youth will be served"—is set upon by his team-mates at all times and seasons. So terribly are such dogs punished that they often have to be destroyed.

The record journey of which I have knowledge in north central Labrador was that made by the Rev. Bishop Martin from Nain to Okak on a matter of urgency. Starting from Nain at seven in the morning with the team of Mission dogs driven by an Eskimo, he reached Okak the same night, having covered by the route he took something over 100 miles. Mr. Kristian Schmitt of the Mission has also made several fine journeys.

When women are travelling, a strong oblong box of wood is lashed on the *komatik*, and over this a frame covered with sail cloth can be placed at night or in bad weather. But an annoying and somewhat dangerous incident is occasionally experienced by the occupants of the "women's box," and this is when the team sight or scent a deer or a fox. If not immediately and cleverly headed off, the dogs stampede at once in pursuit, and the unlucky women and children are bumped along mercilessly or overthrown. Sometimes the dogs break their traces and disappear for hours or for days. Should such a happening occur when the *komatik* is being driven through a wooded district, the chances of a mishap are

much increased, as the dogs with their long traces running on different sides of the trees, are certain to bring the sledge in contact with one of them, a result more than likely to end in a dangerous or even fatal accident. Indeed, thick wood tests the good qualities of a driver, and the whip who can "hold 'em and hit 'em" in fairly thick timber has no further height of skill to climb.

The pace of the team is of course regulated by the smoothness of the surface, and good travelling is more commonly to be met with on the sea-ice or the high barrens. When in spring the Eskimo pass away inland on their annual deer-hunt, long distances are covered each day. The Nain Eskimo make their first camp at Poungassé, fifty miles from the settlement. Here it is necessary to haul dogs, sledges, and outfit up a steep rift to the higher level of the interior. After that there is good going over the snow for a great distance to the south-west. As far as I could gather from talking with the hunters, they have in some years when unable to find the deer, slept five or six times before turning back. This would take them some 200 miles in a south-westerly direction, and it was doubtless upon such a journey that they saw the "great water, greater than any with which we Eskimo are acquainted," and which was possibly Lake Michinakats or Michikamau.

In past days the Eskimo on their caribou-hunts used to push forward looking for the deer until the dog-food was exhausted; when that came to an end and they had so far failed to fall in with the herds, they ate the dogs and afterwards starved to death if they still could not kill game. This year-to-year history of the annual hunt, with its persistent tragedies, now only lives in tradition.

The east coast hunting parties of recent times run little risk, as when the dog-food is half done they turn home again. It is no longer necessary to gamble with their lives in the finding of the deer, upon which formerly much of their winter provision depended, for now they have the Moravian Missions to apply to, and they know very well that they will not be allowed to starve.

The food most prized for the dogs, and that on which they appear to work best, is seal-meat. Caplin, the small fish which is the favourite food of the cod, and which appears in vast shoals off the coast in most seasons, comes next. Whale-meat is also used, but when none of these can be obtained a coarse paste of oatmeal is carried.

Accidents while travelling on *komatik* occasionally occur. A year or two ago, late in the evening, a settler drove over a cliff and was dashed to pieces on the ice below. Interspersed with such tragedies are wonderful escapes such as come to pass in all countries where the snow drifts, for a deep drift makes soft falling. For the most part, however, the huskies are not to be forced to advance over bad or unsafe footing, and many a driver owes his life to their instinct.

The price of a full-grown sledge-dog is from two dollars upwards, and as the spring always sees a large increase in their numbers, a puppy's price at that time of year is often nominal in the settlements, though in the out-lying bays the demand may exceed the supply with the usual results. Even dead puppies are of value, for their soft fur is used for edging slippers.

The litters run to seven or eight in number as a rule, and interbreeding with the wild wolves is by no means unknown. The result of the cross is not markedly more

savage than the pure-bred husky, which, after all, is practically a domesticated wolf. The Eskimo prize a black dog above any other, and black puppies are never killed. The reason is truly characteristic of this essentially utilitarian race, the skin of a black dog whenever he dies is in some demand among the Eskimo dandies for trimming the pointed hoods of the blanket or sealskin dickies or *attacheks*.

The early life of a puppy is generally a bitter experience. The chances are about one in ten that he will be eaten by some big and hungry husky, and even when this danger is over, and until he attains to something of the strength of maturity, he will be driven from his food or comfortable lying-place by full-grown dogs. It is a case of survival of the fittest, and if a dog be knocked down in a struggle for food or in a fight, the other dogs in the pack at once spring upon him and only by human agency can he be saved from the stomachs of his friends. The human agency usually takes the form of an Eskimo woman or boy, who rushes down with a pole or a volley of well-aimed stones in the attempt to scatter the combatants. At any hour of the day or night the sounds of a dog-fight will bring the inmates of a Labrador dwelling tumbling out of doors—to hesitate but for a matter of seconds may mean the death of a valuable dog.

It is practically impossible to keep a domestic animal of any kind on the Labrador on account of the predatory husky. There are, it is true, a few horses at Hamilton Inlet which so far have escaped, but further north they would probably have been killed. Attempts have been made to keep sheep and goats in some of the Moravian settlements, but they were penned inside high

palisades. The few fowls on the coast, however carefully guarded, suffer a constant diminution in numbers. But at Makkovik a cat of remarkable character has lived for ten years, "in the midst of alarms," and daily, almost hourly, owes her survival to the agility with which she takes to the spruce trees that surround the station.

The huskies show marvellous ingenuity and perform no less marvellous feats in order to kill. At Nain they leaped a stockade seven feet high to get at a tame deer, and when leaping is made impossible to them, they often gnaw their way through wooden walls. They are very cunning, as for example a dog, finding a *cache* of meat raised on a scaffold out of reach of leap, and supported by poles thinner than ordinary, chewed away their bases and so secured the meat. The pack also are always aware when a house is empty at the stations, and not unseldom have made their way in during church-time. Once inside, they wreck everything, tearing even the carpets or rugs to pieces, and I should be sorry if they found a baby there; but Labrador babies begin regular church attendance at very tender ages.

Puppies that are played with and handled by the children always turn out better dogs, but no matter how long or carefully a husky is trained, he never becomes trustworthy, as, after years of apparent gentleness, he may break out into savagery. Mr. Payne, recently of the Hopedale Moravian settlement, has, I think, gone furthest in the experiment of reclamation. He has taught a pure-bred husky to trust, beg, and perform other tricks, yet this dog, given temptation, will always go the way of her kind. There would appear to be some quality in the husky that defies all efforts to bring him

anywhere near the standard of faithfulness which we associate with the friend of man. It cannot be doubted that a few masters are brutal in the use of the whip, but as a rule, and in fact almost in every case, the owners of dogs treat them wisely and justly. On the lowest ground it is policy to do so, for the obedience of teams is built upon a clear and strictly enforced justice, a scheme of well-understood punishment and reward.

The husky is then, in the winter, master of Labrador. As more fortunate lands depend upon railways, so the northern people depend upon him; without his aid life could not at present continue. Over leagues of snow and ice he hauls in all man's allies against the cold to his doors; seals from the *sina*, the ice-edge, fuel from the woods perhaps fifty miles away, the carcases of deer from the interior. Without him much of this provision would have to be foregone and many would starve. Add to this that he is extraordinarily healthy and enduring, sleeping out in all weathers, from soaking wet to Arctic cold, that he is perfectly sure-footed, and that he obviously rejoices in his toil in the traces, taking his long days cheerfully, even when at a pinch he travels seventy miles between rest and rest. He is a good servant if not much of a companion to his master.

But now to turn to the darker side of the picture, which will explain why a man sometimes feels the desire stir in him to go out and destroy every husky he can lay hands on. At the opening of this chapter I dwelt on the hopeless treachery of the breed. He is as treacherous as a leopard or a tiger, small germ of the loyal dog-nature appears to exist in him, training and gentling, however prolonged, do not affect the untrustworthiness that is the bed-rock of his nature, and which he derives

from his wolf-blood. This fault in conjunction with the great hunger he often suffers, has led him to commit crimes which it is just possible may yet bring about his extinction by club and bullet over all Labrador.

The most terrible count against the dog packs is the fact that human life has been taken by them when emboldened by the chance fall or weakness of their victim the huskies have been tempted to attack. I will give such instances as came directly under the knowledge of the missionaries of Hopedale and Nain.

An Eskimo woman at Hopedale some few years ago took her baby in a perambulator—a box on wheels—and left it at the door of a friend's house while she went in to chat for a few moments. When she came back she found the infant hanging out of the box, mauled about the head and upper part of the body by the dogs. She snatched up the poor little creature in her arms and ran to the Mission House (as all the Eskimo do in the moment of trouble), but the infant was, of course, quite dead. They suppose the child hung its arm over the side of its cart and the dogs could not resist the temptation of a meal.

Another instance. Three children—a boy and two girls—were berry-picking in the woods close to Nain, when some dogs came round them. One of them, a girl of eight, became terrified, and began to scream. The boy would have beaten off the dogs, for they are readily cowed by any show of boldness, but the second girl held him and dragged him away. The frightened child was pulled down, killed, and partly eaten. A little white, wooden cross stands to-day on the spot where the remains were found.

But now I will relate one of the most extraordinary and daunting stories of which I have knowledge,

On an island in a bay some miles north of Hopedale —the second most southerly mission station—there lived an old man. He was known to me personally, for one day, in 1903, when travelling up Jack's Brook, I came upon him setting a bear-trap. I wrote of him at the time: "A white, forked beard swept his breast, and as we came nearer, we saw he was clad from head to foot in sealskins. On our return, when we mentioned meeting him, we heard that having taken a bear in a trap earlier in the season, the old man, finding himself without a gun, had gone steadily to work and stoned the bear to death."

Four winters ago, this old man—he was between seventy and eighty—started from his home by *komatik*, or dog-sledge, to attend the Christmas church festival at Hopedale. He was accompanied by his wife, whom he had recently married, and by one of his grandchildren. The trail to Hopedale—a trail only used at rare intervals by three families—leads over a pass, and for this pass "Old Man Lane," for such was the name he went by, set out. He had not started very long before a tremendous snowstorm swept down over the land and forced him to change his course. Some days later another settler, who lived in the same Bay (Jack Lane's), started for Hopedale, and was surprised on arrival there to find that Old Man Lane had not put in an appearance. Nor was his fate and that of those with him discovered until the dogs of his team returned to his home on the Island in the bay about a fortnight later. The brutes looked so sleek and fat that the worst was at once suspected, and a couple were shot. The fact that at a post-mortem

examination, human hair was found in the stomachs of these dogs proved their guilt, and the entire team was, of course, destroyed. All that really occurred in the storm and darkness of that December night must remain for ever uncertain, but from discoveries made in the following spring, the probable course of events can be pieced together with accuracy.

Overtaken by the driving snow the old man had wandered from the trail, finally reaching a deserted cabin. Here he arranged for his wife and grandchild to pass the night inside the palisade, while he himself, it appeared, had gone out to lie among his dogs. Even at home it was nothing unusual for him to do this, since he took a great pride in his team and often slept among them, in spite of all remonstrance.

During the night he either was killed by his dogs, or, as is just possible, died from exposure. At any rate, alive or dead, the dogs devoured their master. Inside the palisade, their attitudes preserved through months of snow and frost, his wife and grandchild were found, the boy kneeling at the knees of the woman inside the box of the sledge.

At Savage Bay, in the summer of 1910, a boy of five was killed and partly eaten just outside his father's door by the huskies. This case I give on the authority of Dr. Grenfell. I could, indeed, multiply instances—such as the case of the attack on the H.B. Co.'s factor's daughter, at Cartwright—but the details are painful and no good purpose would be served. It is, of course, true that such incidents are comparatively rare, but every now and again one of these dreadful occurrences takes place, though in five cases out of six the dogs are beaten off before much harm is done. In no spot out-of-doors

is a young child *absolutely* safe. One of Bishop Martin's sons, a boy of three, was attacked on the very threshold of the Mission house. An Eskimo came to the rescue and drove off the brutes, but the shock to the child's nerves was such that he never really recovered it, and he died a year later.

It is, however, not quite fair to lay all the blame for these disastrous happenings upon the dogs alone; their masters must be apportioned their full share of it, for it is only too true that the less prosperous and reliable settlers and Eskimo allow their animals to become so emaciated as to be a scandal—it is a sad sight to see the poor brutes with eyes preternaturally bright, their bodies mere fur and bone, enduring all the tortures of hunger for weeks on end. Indeed the huskies are sinned against as well as sinning. On the other hand even those owners of teams who feed their dogs well and adequately go in fear of them at certain times. I vividly remember one night in 1903—I was new to the country then—I was at the house of a settler, when it was discovered, about ten o'clock at night, that the washing had been left out on the bushes. Neither the settler nor his son seemed inclined to fetch it, so, because I wanted a clean shirt for the morrow, I undertook to do so. As I walked to the bushes, which were about 200 yards away, I was convoyed by the whole pack. Their attitude was certainly inimical and I was glad to pick up a branch by way of a weapon, and still more so when the washing and I were once more safe in the cabin.

The chief reasons why the huskies are occasionally dangerous—as they undoubtedly are—lies in the fact that, true to their wolf ancestry, they attack in packs.

Though not so large as a wolf, they are strongly built and very powerful, and as they stand some $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet or more at the shoulder, and weigh from 80 to 100 lbs., a single husky would prove a formidable antagonist easily capable of killing an unarmed man; but when a pack combine to attack, literally a few seconds suffices to rip away the life and to devour the body of the victim. Personally speaking, I would far rather face any single living animal than I would a pack of huskies, provided they really meant business.

And the huskies are ready to attack at any time, except when they are tired. All they wait for is a leader, so that the danger lies in the temperament and mood of the boldest or the most savage dog. Let him lead and the rest will inevitably back him. An attack is generally opened by the dog or dogs leaping and bounding playfully round. The moment they begin this game, it is wise to go at them with a big stick or a stone, for they will not face a determined attitude. But young children cannot do this, and from time to time, as long as the husky continues to lord it in Labrador, the settlements or the lonely bays will occasionally be the scenes of these horrible events.

Some few years ago it appeared hardly possible that the husky could ever be dispensed with and pass away from the Labrador. I remember in 1903, after hearing a peculiarly harrowing account of an attack upon a little girl, which had taken place that year, asking if there was no possible substitute for the dogs. "Only us," said the settler, conclusively. But since then a presage of change has come. Dr. Grenfell, impelled by the example of the U.S. Government in Alaska, purchased a herd of reindeer from Norway. He brought over

Lapp herdsmen to St. Anthony, on the Newfoundland coast, and in due time he hopes to introduce them into Labrador.

In the points of haulage and endurance of fatigue, it is extremely improbable that the deer can ever equal the husky, but, on the other hand, the deer can find food everywhere on the tundras and barrens, where uncounted square miles of caribou moss flourishes, whereas provision for a husky team means a very serious addition to the amount of weight to be carried on the sledges. Also the deer give excellent milk and would form a supply of fresh meat on a coast where tinned provisions of all kinds make up the staple diet. How wholesome and welcome such a change would be needs no argument.

It may be then that some day even the conservative Labrador will grasp the possibilities of Dr. Grenfell's scheme, which indeed goes much further than I have here space to indicate, but before they can adopt it or keep tame deer the dogs must change their habits or be exterminated. The next few years will be a time of probation, and if the reindeer realise expectations, the huskies may be in part superseded, and with the diminution of their numbers and the better control of those which remain there may pass from the land the shadow of a fear which to-day causes many a father and mother to pray:

> "Deliver my soul from the sword and my darling from the power of the dog."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SETTLERS OR LIVEYERES.

It seems hardly reasonable to write of the Labrador and to omit, as others have done, almost all mention of the white settlers, or *liveyeres*. Of those who dwell in the southerly portion of the peninsula I know very little, but I have come into contact with many whose homes lie beyond Hopedale, having lived in their houses, where I met with warm hospitality and kindness.

I do not think, whether north or south, that the settler is a very enterprising person. Upon the interior of the country he has set no mark, and almost all his energies are, perhaps naturally and rightly, directed towards providing in one week for the sustenance of the next. For all north of Hamilton Inlet this means the predatory life. The liveyere kills that he and his may live. Each year he slays his thousands and tens of thousands of fish, fur and seal. No crops grow upon his land, his only harvest is the harvest of the sea and of the wild. To him most of the arts of peace are a dead letter, he is the Spirit incarnate of utilitarian Destruction. As far as gaining his livelihood is concerned he follows the line of the Eskimo and Indian.

In the south the settlers are numerous, though many are poor, in hard times desperately so, clinging, in fact, upon the rim of starvation. Further north the six Moravian stations give them a base to fall back upon in seasons of sickness, or when, as may easily happen,

resources run short. But in the south the poor liveyere faces a harsh prospect, and when it chances that the bread-winner dies, killed by some accident as often as not, or becomes maimed, the family, being, in a great many cases, entirely lacking in education, sink into thriftless and abject poverty, But to the credit of the Labrador be it spoken, that their claims upon their neighbours rarely lack response. To give an instance of which I am personally cognisant. The head of a poor family died in the south, and his sons and daughters sank deeper into wretchedness, not altogether because of laziness but partly because they had no knowledge of regular work, nor of how to procure by the most ordinary efforts that minimum of provision and comfort which in those parts represents the means of life.

A well-to-do settler from the north, seeing the straits of such a household, numbering some ten in all, took compassion upon these poor folk and carried off a son to act as his help ; by degrees, under his fostering care, one followed another until the whole family were placed in favourable conditions, where they were taught work as well as the amenities of life, and even the old mother finally found her *métier* in becoming the wife of a yet older settler ! The family are, I believe, all now doing well.

It is true that all in that Arctic region are bound together in an offensive and defensive alliance against Nature, the antagonist that knows no pity and strikes each advantage blindly home. Life could be enormously softened by artificial aids, but few such are to be obtained in a country where the inhabitants are too poor and frequently too ignorant to push any claims for preferential treatment in the way of increased facilities

for communication and so forth upon the wealthier Governments nearest at hand. More steamers now ply to the Labrador in the season of open water, but during winter even the south is cut off from the outer world for months at a time, except for a mail or two by dog-sledge. The four or five Marconi stations, also in the south, work only while the fishing fleets are on the coast; after that silence settles down with the snowfall. It is therefore little wonder that the population of the Labrador is not increasing. Yet the requirements of ordinary life are being multiplied everywhere, for the wave that is raised at the centres of civilisation spreads inevitably and dies in a ripple, though perhaps a very slight ripple, on the frontiers of the inhabited world.

But at present exceedingly few dollars find their way to the Labrador, and the struggle for existence is both bitter and long enduring. Indeed, description scarcely seems to touch the realities of occasional episodes in man's war with Nature in these latitudes, but description may be bettered by the life history of a liveyere written round an assumed name.

Bill Bayman lives in a log house at the head of a fiord-like inlet. His dwelling, which is too raw and ill-shaped to be picturesque, squats on a long tongue of land. To the east of him lies salt water; to the west a river tumbles over its stony bed beside his very door. Bill is thirty-two years of age. When he was twenty he married a half-breed girl — white father, Eskimo mother. Here is the story of his marriage.

One day Bill was walking through the woods behind his father's house, when, rounding a clump of spruce, he came suddenly upon a black fox. By good fortune he happened to be hunting "partridges" (the local term

By *Komatik* on land.

By *Komatik* over the sea-ice.

for spruce and willow grouse) and had therefore with him his old sealing-gun, loaded with No. 4 shot. Surprised at the sudden apparition of a man, the fox stood for a startled second, and Bill "gave the gun to he." The fox leaped into the air and fell quite dead. Bill rushed upon it, wild with excitement, and examined the skin. A glance told him that it was one of the prizes of the woods that had fallen to his lot. The pelt was a fine one and the charge of shot had not damaged it much; there was no tear in it as would, of course, have been the case had Bill been using a heavy rifle ball.

The young man drew his knife and carefully skinned the fox and carried off the pelt to his father's house, and a week later sold it for $150. Of this sum he owed $65 for traps and $30 more went in part payment of his father's debt for a gill-net bought the previous year. He therefore found himself in possession of $55, not in cash but in credit on the trader's books. Bill was now face to face with his future.

Two alternative courses presented themselves. On the one hand a further purchase of traps; on the other hand, the alternative took the form of Susan Merrigill, Old Man Merrigill's daughter. Naturally it was Susan, a brown-faced, almond-eyed person, that prevailed. Four days later the couple were married, and the first months of the married state were passed in Father Bayman's house, while Bill was building his shanty at the bay head. As soon as it was ready, they moved in.

Now skip twelve years and look again at the position of Mr. and Mrs. W. Bayman. Nine children have been born under the poor roof, that is none the stronger for the winters that have beaten upon it. Six of the

children survive. The eldest is eleven. He can cut wood, catch fish and generally earn his share of flour and molasses by helping his father. It happens that Bill is one of the few liveyeres who do not go to the cod-fishing in the summer; instead he catches salmon and trout from the stream that flows past his threshold. These he smokes and sells. Susan, his wife, adds to the family resources by making boots from the skins of seals which Bill shoots in the bay. These boots are worth $1·50 a pair, and they may be said to form, to a certain extent, the currency of the Labrador coast. I can myself answer for their excellence, having worn them season after season when hunting in Newfoundland and elsewhere.

During the cold months, Bill lays a round of traps which he visits at fairly regular intervals, and this pretty well sums up his whole means of making a livelihood. It can well be imagined that with so many mouths to feed, Bill has not been able to lay by for bad seasons. As a matter of fact for all those twelve years, he, his wife and children have been too often near to actual starvation. Four times after a bad season only the trader's advances, Dr. Grenfell's aid and the efforts of the Moravian missionaries have kept life in the little hut by the river mouth. Bill is in debt to the trader some hundreds of dollars; he is rather apt to forget that the trader has been his friend in other evil times, and the old hope of his early married days—that he would light upon a second small fortune like that of the black fox skin—has been turned sour, partly because he has so long waited for it, but more so because of the knowledge that should a thing occur, not he but the store at which he trades will reap the benefit.

Once indeed in the period of years, his star appeared to rise again, for after the birth of his second child he cleared $400 by fur. On the strength of this windfall he bought, in partnership with his brother, nets for use in the sea. Hardly had the nets been set, however, when a violent storm destroyed and carried them away. Bill returned to his shanty from the open water, a broken man. He makes no fresh efforts, his one fall with fortune has cowed him, the single evidence of his short prosperity which remains is a gramophone, a belonging to which Bill and his wife have clung. Its tinny music beguiles the long winter evenings, and in some intranslatable way preserves to its owner some memory of his few bright days.

And Bill is a good fellow, hard-working, honest and God-fearing, only the gamble that makes up his life has not gone well for him. Indeed, it can seldom issue on the winning side for the Labrador coast-dweller, since Nature always holds the bank.

Now let us take another type with whom things have prospered. Henry Salt is forty years old. His first wife died fifteen years ago, and lies buried under the bluff at Hopedale. She died at mid-winter in child-bed, and it was months later before they could break the frost-bound ground and lay her to rest. In course of time Henry married again—a dour, angular, but thoroughly good woman, to whom much of his prosperity may be traced. Yet life has been hard for Henry too, and the continual struggle has perhaps dulled his memory, but he has never forgotten his eighteen-year-old wife. Henry was once as poor as Bill, but he staked his all on one throw and won. In the spring of what turned out to be a good fishing season, he invested in a bultow, or long line, with

over one thousand hooks on it, took in two share-men, and then from July to October he worked savagely, unremittingly. He made good money and re-invested it in husky dogs, in traps, in gill-nets. Every winter he has a wide circle of traps, nearly eighty miles round, which he tries to visit at least once a fortnight. This, thanks to his excellent dog team, he is able to do. In a good year Henry on one occasion made as much as £250, a sum that is riches, indeed, on the Labrador.

Yet for all the toil of the past years, Henry Salt knows that the wolf waits not so very far from his door. He has his good years and his bad years, and the one set against the other give about a level result, but he realises that one unlucky sequence of small disasters would cripple his resources. The best he can hope for when he dies is that his widow and children will have enough left to enable them to carry on the battle of life at not too great a disadvantage.

The settlers, when they fish for cod, are mostly hook-and-line men, and their catches are comparatively small. In a good season, when the fish are plentiful, they can make a living and have a little over for simple luxuries that in most parts of the world would be called the barest necessities of life. Besides the activities I have described there are certain families of settlers, especially in the north, who are celebrated for their good dog-teams, and they make a certain amount each year by hiring them out to the few travellers who desire to move north or south, and for other purposes of communication, such as the carrying of the mails.

The population of settlers becomes fewer and fewer as the northern limit is approached. The reasons are obvious, the greater harshness of the climate, the lack of

Christmas at Nain.

Settler Boys at Play.

timber, and the remoteness from the world. In the long fiords or bays, as they are called, which intersect the coast, not too far from the Moravian Brethren's stations, one may here and there find families who spend the greater part of their lives in those lonely surroundings. At the head of such a bay stands a comfortable house, inhabited by an elderly settler, whose sons and daughters have married and have built houses of their own on either side of the bay right down to the sea. During the winter when the Moravian missionary pays his annual visit, he receives the most cordial welcome at these and similar outlying homes.

Most of the liveyeres possess two houses, one for winter residence, and one a summer fishing station, the former occupying a more sheltered position than the latter, which is always close upon the sea. Some prefer to pass the winter in the settlements, but, as I have explained elsewhere, all can have educational advantages for their children by reason of the energy and kindness of the Missions. The influence of the Moravians can be very clearly traced upon the lives of the white people in their neighbourhood; the elders are a superior self-respecting community, and the younger people, well-mannered and intelligent, are only too frequently tempted to go south to fill situations where the pay is better than anything to be found in the north; but this has the unfortunate effect of denuding that part of the coast which most needs educated people of the benefits that their residence there should bestow.

The people living in the lonely outports of Newfoundland have a sufficiently severe winter to undergo, and as communities they live well away on the edge of things. But when they go to the Labrador, it is not

uncommon to hear them commiserate the whites who dwell there. "They lives," said one to me, "in the snow and see nar a person in the year unless he be a deer."

Some of the Labrador settlers give sex to all the ordinary objects of daily life. "Where's your rifle?" you say. "I left he along side the camp fire," is the answer. Or a man will indicate the kettle. "Put he on to boil"; or may be of the wind, he will say, "He's come away right across from George's River." This trick often gives colour to the Northland conversation, and, to the imaginative, to the Northland view of life. But it may be I am generalising from the few individuals with whom I am well acquainted.

Not without pathos are the echoes of our British child-stories; the fairy and the giant take strange shape on the Labrador. The literary taste of the truly wild man trends, of course, towards force and simplicity; the things that touch his sense of the ludicrous nearly always mean disaster or sorrow to the protagonist. On the other side of his nature, he is curiously sentimental and equally curiously callous. I remember once reading Kipling's poem of "The Truce of the Bear," to a Newfoundlander, who could neither read nor write, but who was a splendid woodsman and a fellow of strong intelligence. I imagined the poem would appeal to him who had himself killed bears in his time.

"Nearer he tottered and nearer, with paws like hands that pray—
From brow to jaw that steel-shod paw, it ripped my face away!

Sudden, silent, and savage, searing as flame the blow—
Faceless I fell before his feet, fifty summers ago.
I heard him grunt and chuckle—I heard him pass to his den,
He left me blind to the darkened years and the little mercy of men."

and so on to the end. When that came, I waited to hear my primitive critic's verdict. He was silent. I asked him what he thought of it. He laughed. "The old bear clawed he to rights; didn't he?" was his remark.

The same man was delighted with a very rough rendering of the story of King Æolus and the winds. "They must have been wunnerful scared when they got their knives to the bull's hide." He cried and chuckled over the description for days. To such men the simple and elemental qualities of Homer and Virgil come home every time.

I think in spite of its obvious harshness, the Labrador life does call into action a certain vein of rough imagery if not of actual poetry. "What is it like in the interior?" I asked a settler. "There's trees and this brook"—we were fishing a river at the time—"he grows little till he finishes himself altogether. Then there's rocks and a sandy ridge. I s'pose there's Indians and deer back o' that, and back o' that again a man might go on walking ahead till he died o' old age." A rough man's picture, but surely not an unimaginative one.

Again speaking of an aged man, he said, "He is that old, he's turned white with living in the snow, and he has a wunnerful great beard on him, so big it blows out on each side of he when he faces up wind."

CHAPTER XV.

THE INDIANS OF THE LABRADOR.

The Indians of the interior are probably a diminishing people whose numbers it is difficult to compute, for they live for the most part withdrawn behind their fastnesses of wilderness and stony desert. According to the most reliable estimates they may be counted as some four thousand in all. The large majority of these hunt and trap in the southern part of the peninsula, coming out with their furs to the waters of the St. Lawrence.

In the central country are the lodges of two tribes—the Montagnais to the south and the Nascaupees further north. They have parcelled out certain districts of the interior into hunting grounds, each of which is regarded as a hereditary belonging, passing from father to son. They call no man master, and they live a life of hardship and freedom such as was more common in the world of a hundred years ago.

On their journeys their camps are set beside the waters of countless unrecorded lakes; for men, women and children follow the nomadic life. The Labrador is, as my readers will before this have recognised, a bitter mother; but all that she is unwilling to give the Indian wrings from her. In August he shoots the young Canada geese, spruce-grouse and ptarmigan. The month, in his picturesque language (on which, as on the whole subject of the Indians, Mr. William Cabot, of

Boston, is incomparably the best authority) is called *O-pó-o Pïshum*, that is, the Moon of Flight.

By hunting and fishing the Indian obtains his food from the country over which he travels, and about August he pitches his shifting *tepees* deep in the interior, where the chief event of the year, the autumn killing of the migrating caribou, takes place.

Both to the Montagnais of the more wooded south and the Nascaupees of the Barren Ground, the caribou forms the main support of life. From time immemorial the Indians have gathered to slay them at this season, while they cross the lakes on their mysterious journeyings, the beginning and the end of which no man really knows. Even the path of the migration changes from year to year, and in some seasons the tribes fail to meet with the deer at all. At these times starvation visits the tents and sits, a grim shape, beside the fires. Such a year was 1893, when many of the people died, only half their number surviving to the spring.

It is no exaggeration to say that the Nascaupees depend for their very existence upon the caribou. They rely on the meat for their winter provision; with the sinews they sew; the clothes which protect them against the Arctic cold are fashioned from the pelts, the hair worn inside against the wearer's flesh; their lodges are covered with hides of stags, and the very sparse store of civilised luxury which finds its way to the tents on the lake promontories is largely gained by barter of smoked skins and mocassins made from the same material.

About the season when the caribou may be expected in their long-drawn battalions many thousands strong, all becomes activity in the Indian camps. Up and down the George River the scouts are watching, and when

the leading deer make their appearance, he who sees them signals to his fellows, for the first deer must not be turned.

All is quiet until the advance-guard has entered the water and a fair proportion of caribou have crossed; then the Indians flash out in their canoes and harry the herds, often slaying as many as a thousand. There is no sport in the killing—merely a massacre of helpless swimming creatures. But for days after the battle the hunters sit by their fires and enjoy the greatest of all the luxuries the wilderness provides—the marrow of the deer. Countless multitudes of caribou have been slain upon Indian House Lake; so many, indeed, that the place has become historic.

This raiding of the herds, with trapping, partridge and ptarmigan shooting and freshwater fishing, make up the Indian's hunting for a successful year. But there are few years when one month or another of the twelve does not see these nomadic people face to face with famine. This is more especially the case with the Nascaupees, who pass their lives in the most remote part of the interior, some of them probably never coming into touch with white men.

The Montagnais are a far more civilised race, partly on account of local conditions; for Southern Labrador, having a less rigorous climate, possesses more settlers with whom the Indians come in contact. Further, they long ago passed under the teaching of the Oblate Fathers, and now profess the Roman Catholic faith. The Fathers keep up annual visits with their converts, who seldom move far to the north; and in fact (particularly of late years) they spend a part of each year encamped not very far from the coast settlements.

The Home of the Nascaupees.

The Children of the Barrens.

During the winter of 1909-10 a lady of the Moravian Mission, while travelling by *komatik* southwards from Nain, visited the tent of a Montagnais some distance behind Hopedale. The old Indian received her with much hospitality and apologised for not offering her tea, as his supply was exhausted.

There is a pronounced physical difference between the Montagnais and the Nascaupees, the former being much shorter, with somewhat broad faces and blunt features, while the Nascaupees retain the tall slender forms and high features of the typical Red Indian. The tribes intermarry, for I know of at least one intermarriage, though this may be a rare instance.

The head-quarters of the Nascaupees may be said to be on Indian House Lake, the shores of which are, in truth, a battleground over which an unrecorded but terrible struggle is fought out. This battle has endured for generations; the antagonists are Nature on the one side and the little tribe of Nascaupees on the other. The Indians can hope for no aid in their conflict. Shut in upon all sides by the mighty Barrens, help cannot reach them, nor have they sought it. Few people of white race have yet set eyes on Indian House Lake, and the half-dozen expeditions which have passed up and down the River have spent but half-an-hour at the Nascaupee camp before they boarded their canoes and voyaged on.

It is believed that the Nascaupees came from the far south, being driven north before the onslaughts of the Iroquois about the date when Canada was first occupied by the French. They fled through the wooded south of Labrador, still pursued by their remorseless enemies, who were not shaken off till they had pushed the flying tribe

up to those naked table-lands that occupy so much of the central regions of the country. These are dented with innumerable lakes and marshes, and covered with gigantic boulders; enormous tracts being entirely timberless and exposed to the cruel forces of the Arctic.

After many wanderings the poor hunted creatures must have found in the valley of the Barren Ground River a true Land of Promise. Here all was changed indeed. Spruce, elder, juniper and birch grew in the sheltered hollows, and woods and marshes alike were crossed and seamed with the high-roads of travelling bear and caribou; the tangled bush hid coveys of willow grouse, while the very rocks yielded the crouching ptarmigan. All these they found, not to speak of other game—foxes, lynx, wolves, hares, Canada geese, black ducks, and many more. It can well be imagined that when the Naskaupees first entered this region they believed that the faces of their gods were indeed turned towards them. Game on the hills, fish in the river, wood for their fires, *teepee* poles to be had for the cutting—what more could they desire?

In those days the country was virgin and the deer plentiful. The latter are so still, and it is certain that during many years the Indians must have fared well, for Indian House Lake appears to be the favourite crossing-place in all Labrador for the migrating caribou. Thus they learned to live by the deer; and so, while the herds held to the old migratory route, all went well on the George. After 1828, when McLean visited them, a veil dropped over their life by the Lake for more than seventy years. No one, save a single Roman Catholic priest, saw them in their home camps; the tribe lived secure behind their impenetrable ramparts. It can hardly

be doubted that they gorged and starved alternately. At any rate, they survived in numbers not too much lessened; and so they continued to exist until the dreadful winter of 1893, when, as I have said, deer and game failed.

The Nascaupee families were for many years in the habit of coming out to the Atlantic at Davis Bay Inlet to barter at the post of the Hudson's Bay Company which is situated there. But in 1910, for some reason, they made a change; and a trading party of fifteen, of whom some four or five were Montagnais, came out at Voysey's Bay as usual; but there, abandoning their canoes, they hired the resident settlers to take them by trap-boat to Nain to transact their business at the Moravian Mission store. Some travellers have dwelt upon the Indian terror of salt water; but if this fear existed at one time, it would now appear to have passed away: the Indians who came to Nain showed no symptoms of any feeling of the kind, as in coming and going from Voysey's Bay they must have covered some sixty miles of sea-water.

The old racial antagonism between the Indians and the Eskimo has also apparently quite died out—at any rate on the eastern coast. For something like two hundred years the feuds and battles between the two peoples were "continual and bloodthirsty to a terrible degree" (Gosling's Labrador, p. 165). Tradition tells of a massacre, about the year 1640, in which the Indians slew a thousand Eskimo. Even so recently as 1890 Warburton Pike, in his travel book, "The Barren Grounds of Northern Canada," says that while on the Great Fish River he could not obtain an Indian guide to the head of the river, "they have such a dread of

the Esquimaux . . . for many years they have not met, and although the Esquimaux seen by Anderson on the Great Fish River appear peaceful enough, the Yellow Knives hunting at the head of the river are in constant fear of meeting them."

But no trace of this enmity was observable at Nain, where many of the Eskimo saw Indians for the first time in their lives in August, 1910. It was a quiet Sunday afternoon when the Eskimo raised loud cries and ran down to the little wooden jetty, as they always do on sight of an approaching boat. The excitement was greater than usual, for the two trap boats crossing the bay contained passengers the like of whom they had never before seen. In a short time the Indians landed and walked along the wharf in single file, with bundles upon their shoulders, to a house on the beach placed at their disposal by Mr. Schmitt of the Mission. They sat on the ground round the walls side by side, dumb and dirty, tired and wretched-looking, after their long weary journey from the interior.

A small crowd of Eskimo stood inside the doors staring curiously at them, but one or two others, bustling about with eager kindness, had lit the stove and put on water to boil, and presently Mr. and Mrs. Schmitt took them tea, sugar and biscuit, for they were undoubtedly very hungry. As far as one could learn the Indians had never brought their women to Davis Inlet, but three accompanied them to Nain. One of them was tightly wrapped in folds of greased white calico; another was muffled in a blanket; the third was a young girl. The men sat silent and sullen with handkerchiefs and cloths bound round their heads, and one had a piece of fur hanging from his shoulders.

A Mixed Marriage—Nascaupee and Montagnais.

By next morning they looked rested and more cheery, and climbed up the stairs into the store with a good deal of eagerness. They had brought dressed deerskins, the pelt of a bear and of a wolverine, with a few wolf skins and some half-made mocassins embroidered on the uppers for barter. A Montagnais acted as interpreter and pointed out the various articles on the shelves that his companions desired to examine, each of which was carefully weighed in the hand before purchase, as the long portages on their homeward journey made every extra ounce of importance.

They bought a good deal of tea, one man taking no less than 16 lbs. Brightly coloured prints attracted them in the way of materials, red, striped blue and magenta, pink, clear dark blue, and so on, and later they invested in some store clothes. Besides these things they purchased tobacco, cartridges, boxes of caps, matches, fish-hooks of the largest size, a few reels of cotton, and spent some time in choosing skeins of brilliant Berlin wools for embroidery purposes, some packets of rather fine needles, and no less than twelve dozen pearl buttons, shirt size. These latter are used by the Montagnais to ornament their flat round caps. They bartered each pelt or bundle of deerskins for so much money, the price was handed to them and they then bought with the amount as far as it went. Mouth organs were very popular, and it was easy to see how they hankered after a concertina; but evidently the means of the party did not run to the necessary price.

At first they were all very silent and shy; but that mood soon wore off, and they laughed and talked gaily. The men, when they raise their voices, speak in a curious flat-toned falsetto. They spat freely all the

time, though they were not allowed to smoke in the store. One boy who had acquired a clay pipe solemnly licked it all day long and went away in the trap boat two days later still licking.

One of the young women, a Naseaupee, was distinctly handsome and obviously much admired. She was given any number of pieces of bright-coloured stuffs: a red petticoat, kettles, cups and saucers; and finally a cake of scented soap and a bottle of Florida water! One young man—evidently very flush of cash—bought for her anything she fancied, and at each purchase the men laughed loudly. The second woman, a Montagnais, was very composed and quiet, but for every special article of personal luxury, such as soap and scent, lavished upon the Nascaupee belle, she extracted a counterpart from her tall fine-looking Naseaupee husband.

The wrapping up of the purchases was promiscuous; for example, several pounds of tea were tied up into the end of a length of cotton print—sugar was wrapped in new handkerchiefs. None of them appeared to have any idea of folding up their freshly acquired belongings, excepting the beauty, who arranged all that appertained to herself with neatness; the young settlers who had come with them in the trapboats helping the remainder of the party.

The women wore store dresses but had handkerchiefs bound in something of a cone shape about their heads. Their hair was parted on the brow and braided in two plaits which were rolled up to the level of the cheeks and tied about with a band. The married women displayed beaded bands, but the young girl's hair was tied with a piece of plain blue cloth. The men all had store

Montagnais Indians.

The Nascaupee Belle and two Montagnais women

trousers ; one was accoutred in a bright red pair, ragged and dirty ; another took no little pride in his magenta stockings—just such stockings as were worn on Big-Side at Fettes. Many sported Dutch fisherman's caps with falling point and tassel, which can be obtained at the Hudson's Bay Company's posts. The more picturesque and more conservative wore a beaded band round the brow, worked in a pattern, white being the predominating colour.

Others again, who showed the Montagnais type of feature, wore flat round caps of cloth decorated with birds worked in white beads at each side and a symbol at the back like this, of which no one seemed able to explain the meaning. In front the caps were variously dotted with shirt buttons, as can be seen in the photographs.

Some of the men were arrayed in baggy store jackets, but beneath hung tunics of deerskin, one under the other, of different lengths. The younger men wore tattered red and yellow sashes, the ends hanging down in front. The entire party were shod in deerskin mocassins.

They were all very merry and ready to be amused in spite of the very evident wear and tear of the exhausting travel they had undergone, the repetition of which lay before them. They only stayed for a couple of days, and departed as soon as their purchases were completed. Again they passed down the wharf with their tightly-tied bundles on their backs, as before in single file, and stood or sat in a picturesque group while the boats were being loaded. They seemed to be on the most friendly terms with the Eskimo, who crowded down to see them off. There was much warm hand-shaking, some of the people even kneeling down on the jetty-head to grasp

the fingers of the Indians once more after they had entered the boats.

The Indians say "Bo-you" as a greeting—evidently a corruption of "bon jour;" at parting they cried out something that sounded like "Yomai!" They crouched on their heels in the trap-boats, and as these got out into the bay the sails were swung to the wind and they glided quickly out of sight round the point.

It was not hard to realise the pitilessness of the life to which they were returning. It may be that the Montagnais left them and went southwards to their own district, but the Nascaupees were bound for the more northerly latitudes of the interior. The former showed the difference of living, for they looked fairly well fed and strong; but the Nascaupees were one and all a gaunt race—unkempt sons of the wilderness, with the wildness of long ages in their eyes.

We say in civilisation that "a woman's work is never done," and far more is that true of the helpmate of the semi-savage man of the Barren Grounds. She makes and breaks camp, cooks, she cuts up and carries her husband's kill; she dresses the skins of the deer; she is responsible for the fashioning of the foot-gear and the greater portion of the clothing; on a journey she often paddles the canoe, and on a portage she carries the heavier load.

In fact, it is easier to write down the duties *not* expected of a squaw than those which immemorial custom demand of her. Indeed, the North-land is a country calling aloud for a "woman's movement"—a crusade of emancipation! But such will never come, even in a thousand years; for in the wilderness the provider of food, Man the Hunter, has reigned, reigns now, and

ever will reign. Having slain his deer or his bear, he will take his ease in the best place in the lodge, deputing all lesser offices to the mother of his children. It is a law, and the laws of the North-land do not change.

Yet the years are fast thinning out the numbers of this interesting race, but some are still left to carry on the age-long war with Nature; for the Nascaupees are a true hunter people, dependent upon game for life, the only inhabitants of the far interior of the Labrador. And the writer, at any rate, glories in their freedom and their picturesqueness.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CARIBOU OF THE LABRADOR.

THERE are supposed to be two distinct forms of caribou in Labrador—the Barren Ground and the Woodland. There are undoubtedly marked differences in horn growth and also in bodily size and weight, the Woodland being the larger and heavier animal. Yet in my opinion no really accurate line of division can be drawn between these sub-races, as I hope to prove by the series of photographs which illustrate this chapter.

I have devoted eight hunting trips to the caribou: three in Newfoundland, two in Labrador proper, and three in Quebec Province. With regard to the last-named place, the herd which migrates in the Saguenay region seems to me to be an offshoot, or perhaps, alas! only a relic of the so-called Labrador "Woodland" herd.

To begin, then, with the north. In these higher latitudes the caribou still remains plentiful, and the form which appears upon the treeless Barrens is a small beast rarely exceeding 300 lbs. in weight, but carrying magnificent antlers.

Of these Barren land caribou, there are said to be three distinct herds. The first inhabits the country round the Koksoak River, the second and the third range the region from Hamilton Inlet to the south-east, to the Barrens that rise round the George and Fraser Rivers.

But reliable or accurate information concerning the movements of these immense herds is not only difficult but practically impossible to obtain. Here and there, it is true, they are seen by the Indians or the Eskimo, who take toll of their thousands, but for the greater part of the year they disappear entirely from human ken. Their movements, like those of their congeners in the Hudson's Bay Territory, are quite uncertain, and although the Indians on the George River do annually kill deer, yet it is certain that the number of caribou seen by them in some seasons is very much larger than in others. Therefore the Indians obviously cannot foresee the line of migration with any certainty.

The Eskimo nowadays rarely hunt the deer, except in spring time, when the sledging parties from Nain and Okak sometimes meet upon the Barrens of the far interior. The favourite route followed by these people appears to lead in a south-westerly direction. The Nain hunters reach the high level of the inland country at Poungassé, a point fifty miles from the head of Nunaingoak, the bay immediately to the north of the settlement of Nain. But the Eskimo are not always successful; in fact, the entire failure of the hunt is by no means an uncommon occurrence.

My own experience deals chiefly with the movements of this herd, which, very roughly speaking, migrates north-west in the spring and south-east in the autumn.

An old trapper named Broomfield, who lives on the shores of Jack Lane's Bay, stated to me that for many years prior to 1903, between November 5th and 18th, the caribou appeared regularly in great numbers in the woods along the bay shore and even upon the beaches. "It was no trouble to shoot all I wanted," he said. But

since 1903, he has not killed or so much as seen a single deer.

In 1906, Mrs. Hubbard, during her expedition to which I have already referred, came upon the main migration on August 8th. This grand spectacle she saw towards the northern end of Lake Michikamats, over 200 miles as the crow flies from the eastern coast and more than 150 south-west of Nain. They then appeared to be moving east and crossing and re-crossing the river. Mrs. Hubbard also records another note as to their movements:—

"Towards the end of August the following year (1907), Mr. Cabot, while on a trip inland from Davis Inlet on the east coast, found the caribou in numbers along the Height of Land, and when he joined the Indians there, though the great herd had passed, they had killed near a thousand." Dillon Wallace reports scattered specimens on the George in September.

In the years 1908 and 1909 few deer were killed by the Eskimo at the heads of the bays, though in the latter year a settler shot some near Christmas time in a bay south of Hopedale.

These few facts were all that we were able to gather about the movements of the Barren Ground caribou prior to starting on our journey into the interior in July, 1910. After our return we learned from the Rev. Mr. Lenz, of the Moravian Mission at Hopedale, that once since Broomfield saw the great herds—that means in a year between 1903 and 1910—the caribou came out on the coast opposite Davis Inlet and were passing in a solid mass of animals for three days.

To return to my own experience. On our journey inland, as I have described in my narrative, we came

Typical Barren Ground Horns. Length 58 ins.
Spread 48 ins. Killed at Nain.

Labrador Barren Ground Horns approximating
to the Scandinavian Type. Killed at Nain.

Caribou Head from Northern Quebec,
showing the narrow spread of Horns,
which is very typical.

Typical Caribou Horns from Northern Quebec. Length 41 inches.

Intermediate Type between Labrador Barren Ground and Woodland.
Length 50 inches. Killed at Makkovik

upon evidence that the great herd had recently passed in huge numbers. The migration paths, twenty feet wide and trodden deep into the Barrens, spread in every direction over the plateau, and the deer must have reached the George in June and early July. There were signs that the Indians had killed a great many in the latter month on the banks of the George itself. The deer which we saw were undoubtedly stragglers from the main migration.

Some number of caribou, however, appear to remain on the highlands behind the coast, for Boaz—the Eskimo who left us and returned to Nain in early August—reported having seen several deer on the hills about the mouth of the Fraser River. We also heard later that a party of Eskimo sailing along the coast from the south of Nain, spied a deer or two on the shore, of which they secured one and carried the meat into Nain. Taking these facts into consideration, it would seem that with regard to their combined movements, the deer's will is "the wind's will," and that though in autumn they are impelled by the migratory instinct to seek the timber and the neighbourhood of the coast, and *vice-versa* in the spring and summer to return to the barren rocky heights, yet the actual line of migration is seldom for two consecutive years the same, and often not even approximately the same. Consequently their route can never be forecast or calculated, and the chance that a traveller, spending a summer in exploring Labrador, will meet the main migration is small, because such an encounter must be the result of sheer luck, even if that luck is aided by experience.

One finds it difficult to imagine the reasons that govern the choice of route in the deer migration. It is

perplexing to know that they seem to desert one line of march for no apparent cause, while they unquestionably return again and again over another where they have been annually slaughtered. It also appears that they can be diverted from their course by the wind of an Indian camp, a shot at their leaders, and most of all by forest fires, which in later years have unluckily been not uncommon in the peninsula. We talk of the uncertainty of cricket, but it is nothing compared with the uncertainty of hunting Barren Ground caribou in Labrador!

The desertion of the coast by the herds is supposed by the Eskimo to have been brought about by the Indians, who want to preserve the deer for themselves. The Eskimo also say that the migration is led by a single stag, which they call "the Master stag." When the hunters sight the herds, they try to single out this stag and kill him, as that throws the whole company of caribou into confusion. They stop and look about and do not know what to do until another stag takes the lead. In the meantime the hunters can easily kill as many deer as they require.

A certain amount of personal observation and study, supplemented by interviews with many hunters, have given me some idea of the main order of the caribou's year.

In June the young are dropped, and at this season the deer are moving on to the Barrens and usually towards the east. In July and August, the months of flies, they take refuge upon the high ground among the rocks and where the winds may help to rid them of their tormentors. I shall return to this subject. On the high ground the stags grow their horns, and as soon

as these attain a fair growth, but while they are still in velvet, the caribou begin a desultory movement which later quickens into the autumn migration. The rut begins in October and continues possibly into early November, when the stags fight their great battles. As to the time when the horns become clean, the evidence is exceedingly conflicting: though every hunter is very positive about his own facts, yet the dates vary awkwardly.

Hardy's experience and my own I give below. On August 30th I shot a three-year-old stag; his horns were so soft as to be breakable at the tops between finger and thumb. Yet on August 29th we had seen a rubbing tree, on which a stag had cleaned his horns; this, however, was in the woods by the George River, and the deer may have approximated to the Woodland type. On the other hand Hardy saw a stag at the head of Nunaingoak Bay on September 20th, and the animal was in full velvet. Also, as late as the 28th of the same month, he found a rubbing tree with a fresh piece of velvet beside it which was not more than a couple of days old.

Broomfield assured me that he had killed stags with the velvet still clinging to their horns during the first days of November, but I think the bulk of the evidence goes to prove that the big stags are clean by about the 20th September.

While the antlers are growing, the stags certainly desert the does, and remain for the most part either solitary or in small bands; though here again we have a somewhat contrary opinion, as Mrs. Hubbard says that when she saw them on August 8th "male and female were already herding together." At any rate this seems

to show that the period of segregation does not last very long. From her account the horns, though still in velvet, were fully grown, for she mentions "the horns . . . . . of the stags seemed as if they must surely weigh down the heads on which they rested." We were less lucky, for of the 72 deer we saw in August not more than three had antlers of any size.

The bigger beasts and the herd-masters appear to drop their horns in November, and probably by December it would be hard to find a fine trophy still on the head where it grew. Throughout our entire travelling over the great central plateau we came almost daily upon cast horns. Some were of a fine size, which proves that large numbers of the deer pass the early winter upon the wind and snow-swept Barrens. Others seek the lower woods, for Hardy found a quantity of cast horns among the stunted forests about Tikortotak Bay.

It is, in fact, very difficult to make any statement concerning the movements of the deer without at once meeting with another experience which contradicts it flatly. To say that all the caribou go to the woods in November is as incorrect as to insist that they remain upon the Barrens. No man knows whither they come nor whither they go, and where they spend the greater portion of the year is a problem yet to besolved.

The truth, I think, is this. In Labrador vast herds roam over a vast country. These herds are subject to certain instincts which draw them to move according to the seasons from one district to another, which instincts the great majority of them obey, though some hold aloof from the general movement. Yet throughout the thousands of square miles that make up their feeding

grounds, no man can say where they will be found at any given time.

This view is borne out by the experience of the Eskimo. In one spring caribou may be killed near Hopedale, while the Nain hunters, searchingahundred miles to the north, fail to sight a single animal. The following season the Nain bays may be full of deer and the Hopedale men go hungry. It is, indeed, a gigantic gamble, and even the Indians on the George, whose whole lives have but one object—to find the herds—often fail to come across them for months at a time.

Although in comparison to his Woodland brethren the caribou of the Barren Grounds is both lightly made and small, yet he carries splendid antlers. Of the pairs in my possession, one measures 58½ inches over the curve, and is the tenth longest recorded in Mr. Rowland Ward's book of Horn Measurements. But among the piles of antlers which we found on the shores of Indian House Lake belonging to caribou slain by the Nascaupees, were several, nay, many, that put to shame this fine head. I remember one in particular which showed 53 points and measured well over 60 inches in length, besides being a heavier type. But, unluckily, long exposure had rendered it so brittle that it crumbled to dust on the slightest pressure.

Another pair of Barren Ground horns procured for me from an Eskimo hunter by Captain Jackson, of the s.s. *Harmony*, and which I presented to the United States National Collection—of which that keen and sound hunter and zoologist, Dr. W. T. Hornaday, is the high priest—though much shorter, carries a large number of points and two evenly developed brows. An even development of brow tines is a very rare feature of

the Barren Ground antlers, amongst which one brow is almost always represented by a single spike. In fact I know of no other Barren Ground trophy that carries the two brows in such perfection.

Another point to be noted in the horn development of the Labrador race is the propinquity of bays to brows. In almost every instance the bays, or secondary shovels, are thrust forward upon long and, near the base, thin and round horn-stems; and this is the case although, as may be seen from the illustrations, the development and final palmation of the bays become considerable. In this feature the Labrador caribou of course resembles the Norwegian reindeer, as indeed they resemble them in other respects. For all that the two types are, to my mind, more or less distinct. In an examination of some hundreds of pairs of horns of both countries I found the average development of the top branches superior in the Norwegian antlers, though those from Labrador were the heavier. These slight variations may be accounted for by the fact that the great majority of the caribou of Labrador spend a part of the year in the timber, while the wild Norwegian reindeer never see a tree. This difference of environment may explain the heavier and more massive horns of the former.

There is another point of resemblance between the Barren Ground caribou of Labrador and the reindeer of Norway. In both countries the does carry horns, which are lacking in ten per cent. of the Newfoundland variety. On the Barrens I have never seen a hornless doe, and if such specimens exist I should be inclined to regard them as freaks. Moreover, not only have the does of the Barrens horns, but these horns are long and display many points. Thirteen or fourteen tines are

quite common, but I have never come across anything at all approaching the forty-seven point doe's head which was exhibited in one of the Norwegian museums.

Although in recent years comparatively few caribou have been killed on the coast of Labrador, yet now and again a great piece of good luck falls to the lot of some schooner or Eskimo boat which comes creeping north in the early summer. Such craft, as they pass through the long winding tickles or straits among the rocky islands off the mainland, have aboard them many eyes always on the look-out, so that an animal as large as a caribou has little chance of escaping observation, and from time to time small bodies of deer which have been caught unawares by the break-up of the ice on one of the outer islands, are seen and killed. Such cases used to occur almost every year, but they are now becoming very rare; chiefly, I think, because of forest fires which have been so numerous during the last decade. A forest fire would alter the line of migration and the main herd would avoid the coast, or if they came out to the sea at all, they would choose the shores of one or other of the many great fiords that remain not only uninhabited but still unknown. During the whole summer and autumn of 1910, only a single caribou was killed near Nain, and not one near Hopedale.

In the present year of grace it seems to me that the caribou have but three enemies to fear. First, the Indians, both Montagnais and Nascaupee; the second, the Eskimo sledgers of the spring hunt; and the last and most persistent are the wolves.

The Indians spear a very large number when they meet the main migration; the Eskimo, owing to the fact that they cannot take away more meat than their

komatiks will carry, are not likely to make any great slaughter; but year in, year out, the wolves levy a continuous and heavy toll, as they hang for ever on the flanks of the migration. Yet it is probable that the wolves fulfil a purpose in keeping up the standard of the caribou breed, as they kill off the more weakly animals. Perhaps they do the most harm at calving time, when they pursue and slay the does heavy with young, and no doubt many fawns also.

As to the numbers of the Barren Ground caribou, it is impossible to give any opinion or to make even the wildest guess. That they still muster in vast hosts is certain. At Fort Chimo in the north, the factor of the Hudson's Bay Company watched them pass for three whole days "in hundreds of thousands." Mr. Lenz, of Hopedale, said that on the occasion when the herds came out opposite Davis Bay Inlet, they were passing in a solid mass for three days. I heard much the same from the Broomfields, who saw the caribou migration in the neighbourhood of Jack Lane's Bay, advancing in crowded masses for days. Thus, although the deer have probably suffered from forest fires, more particularly in late years since white men have landed on the coast in greater numbers, I cannot find myself in agreement with those who hold that the deer are decreasing at any alarming rate. Some of these opinions are local, of course, for the inhabitants of a district where the deer have been in the habit of appearing more or less regularly, are apt to put down their non-appearance to diminishing numbers, though in reality the causes are very different.

Some are inclined to attribute the alleged lessening of the herds to the annual slaughter by the Indians, but

Roads cut by migrating Caribou.

the tribes are little better armed now than formerly, and the weapon with which the greater part of their killing is done is the spear which they have always used. Consequently, there is no reason to think they destroy more animals than they have destroyed through many generations. In any case the killing would have to be on an incredible scale to really affect the "hundreds of thousands" that have been seen in the close-packed army of the migrations.

Thus the supposed diminution of the Barren Ground herds does not seem traceable to any cause at present ascertainable, and it must be remembered that once the deer reach the western bank of the George River, they pass beyond the ken of man white or red.

The building of the Reid Newfoundland Railway has materially altered the movements of the deer in that island; in like manner forest fires and other causes have in all probability altered the range of those in Labrador. The Indians, as well as the Eskimo, bear witness that if the advance guard of the migration be interfered with, the whole line is diverted from the original route, and as the killing of the leading stag is sometimes the chief aim of the native hunters, one can understand how a good many changes are brought about.

A characteristic of the Labrador caribou that we observed and which caused us surprise, was their dislike to crossing water. We saw them make immense circuits to avoid this necessity: they would travel completely round a lake rather than swim across it. The Newfoundland caribou, on the contrary, take readily to water. But it must be noted that the Barren Ground deer of Labrador, seen on migration by Mrs. Hubbard, swam in a "broad unbroken bridge from mainland to

island,"—the island being some three-quarters of a mile out.

I have mentioned that the deer seek refuge on the breezy open Barrens in July and August on account of the flies, those intolerable pests of the Labrador which torture every living creature. In addition to the swarming mosquitoes and smaller flies, they have their own particular persecutors, some of which are over half an inch in length. One species infests the nostrils and throat of the deer and bore into the thicker part of the tongue. These are probably allied to the bot flies, and few caribou are killed that do not show maggots about the nostrils and the root of the tongue.

There is also another fly, the eggs of which, in all probability, pass through the mouth and throat of the deer into the body. There they mature, raising lumps and swellings, especially along the back and sides of the animal, and finally drill their way out. I have seen hides rendered quite worthless by the action of these larvæ; in fact, many look as if a charge of small shot had been sent through them. Besides this, the deer have to endure the attacks of millions of mosquitoes of a power and virulence unrivalled by their kin elsewhere, not to speak of more than one kind of huge gad-fly that bite with a vigour proportionate to their size.

It is therefore natural that the deer should desert the woods and waters at the fly season to seek relief on high and open ground, where they can, to a certain extent at least, escape from this plague.

The Barren Ground caribou of Labrador, when met singly or in small bands, are quite difficult of access, though, as with other kinds of deer, the wildness varies with the individual animal or animals. Curiosity

A Bear-Path over the Reindeer moss.

Antlers of Caribou killed by Nascaupee Indians at a crossing-place on Indian House Lake.

is the bane of the caribou, and although some would bound away scared at the bare sight of man, others would circle round us in order to get to windward, and, in doing so, usually approached within range.

Should a hunter, however, chance to come upon a caribou down wind, the animal, in most cases, will quickly put miles between himself and the scent that so terrifies him. Even to this rule there are exceptions, though the exceptions are generally immature beasts.

Yet I have reason to believe that the Barren Ground caribou is not naturally a very shy creature. Warburton Pike, in his work "The Barren Ground of Northern Canada," describes his meeting with the migration on the shores of Lake Mackay, and says: "The caribou, as is usually the case when they are in large numbers, were very tame; and on several occasions I found myself right in the middle of a band with a splendid chance to pick out any that seemed in good condition." He adds that even the women and children of the Indians were able to kill them. I am inclined to think that the very wild deer which we came across from time to time had recently been chased, probably by Indians, or possibly wolves.

The caribou of the Barren Ground have unquestionably better sight than the Woodland type, and though in this point they cannot compare with the red deer, yet they are likely to become alarmed while the hunter is still at a distance which would not trouble the equanimity of their Newfoundland cousins even upon the most open country. But in south and central Newfoundland the wolves have been almost exterminated, and the caribou of those wide-rolling barrens have nothing to fear save man.

On the other hand, the Newfoundland deer has good ears, and is not easy of approach in the thick wood which he frequents during the period while he is growing his horns and in the short interval when he cleans them before the rut.

Now for a few words about the so-called Woodland caribou. That a distinct Woodland type does exist is undeniable; but whether there is a third intermediate type produced by the inter-breeding of the Woodland and the Barren Ground caribou is a moot point.

First of all we will consider the true Woodland caribou of Canada. This is a big animal, a bull weighing up to 450 lbs, or even 500 lbs. Its hoofs are very large, much larger than those of the Newfoundland variety (*R. Tarandus Terranovæ*), and in colour it is of a darker brown. I have hunted this animal on five separate trips in Quebec Province, and regard it as the extreme type of Woodland caribou of Eastern Canada and Labrador. It is growing rarer and rarer, and is now more plentiful in Quebec than in Labrador, where, according to the evidence of Dr. A. P. Low, it is "almost exterminated," but the extermination has been caused rather by forest fires than by the rifle or the wolf.

The Quebec Woodland caribou (*R. Tarandus*), when caught in the open, is a sluggish and stupid animal, although in thick wood it is difficult to outwit. I can recall a good instance of the inert characteristic.

One morning I was crossing an upland covered with small trees—a *brulée* in fact—when I perceived a Woodland stag intently regarding me at a distance of about a quarter of a mile. As I put up my glass to examine his antlers he started away at right angles, and I ran

through the trees to cut him off. I did not lose sight of him at once, and, after going about 200 yards, saw him stop. I lay down, and soon had my telescope fixed on his horns. Although he was a big stag and his antlers were wide, they carried few points, and both brows were mere spikes, so I gave up all intention of shooting him, and, rising to my feet, I walked straight towards him. Until I was within fifty yards of him he remained quite still, then circled a little to the left, and almost immediately crossed my wind. I shall never forget his tremendous bound in the air as he made off. In a district infested by wolves no mature deer would allow so near an approach.

The expeditions which have gone into the wooded portions of Labrador have been singularly unsuccessful in killing caribou, and even the settlers at the bayheads obtain very few deer, and those that they do succeed in shooting are often of the Barren Ground variety, which, as I have said, spend some months of the year in the timber.

The Labrador herds undoubtedly migrate south into Northern Quebec, and return according to the season. Thus in the north of Labrador we find the extreme Barren Ground type, and in Quebec Province the extreme Woodland. Somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hamilton Inlet the two types overlap, and it is there —in the timber—that we may suppose they interbreed, as many of the caribou killed near (say) Makkovik and Hopedale present the distinctive features of both races.

But I do not think the hypothesis that inter-breeding takes place at points where the herds meet need be regarded as the necessary explanation of the gradual blending of one type with another. This gradation of

type may be owing to the effect of environment. For instance, in bodily development the Woodland caribou of the south is a larger and more heavily built beast than the Woodland caribou of Central Labrador, which, in its turn, is heavier than its congener of the Barren Grounds. This inequality of size and weight may be entirely due to the different conditions of food and climate in the respective districts ; for it is, of course, well known that animals of the same species tend to be modified according to their surroundings, and to merge into variations from the original type.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON FISHING IN THE LABRADOR,
BY
G. M. GATHORNE-HARDY.

IN this chapter I propose to confine myself to my own experience of fishing in Labrador, an experience which is too limited to permit me to deal more broadly with the general possibilities of the country from an angler's standpoint. It was confined to members of the trout family—sea trout, brook trout, and Labrador lake-trout, or *namaycush*, and my only introduction to their nobler relation, the salmon, was at the Mission station at Hopedale, where a specimen netted in a river some distance to the southward appeared one day at the dinner-table. For the most part—so far as I could learn—salmon fishing on the East Coast is confined to that portion lying between Hamilton Inlet and the Straits of Belle Isle: some of the rivers in that locality supplying phenomenal sport in late July and August to those willing to brave the mosquitoes and to spare the time for a visit to so inaccessible a country. Further north, salmon appear to be exceptional, if not altogether absent—a fact which came as a surprise to me personally, and which seems difficult to reconcile with the universal prevalence of the salmon's near relation, the sea trout. These are netted in bays into which a mere trickle of water runs—as at Nain, as well as in the mouths of rivers like the Fraser in which the fishermen would

naturally look for them, and—acting on experience drawn from Norway and elsewhere—for salmon also.

My preparations for fishing during the course of our expedition into the interior of Labrador had frankly been made with a view rather to filling the pot than to sporting considerations. The tackle was all coarse and strong and the flies large. This policy (thoroughly mistaken, as the event proved) was based on an experience of Canadian trout fishing during a big game hunting trip in the Province of Quebec. In the lakes and streams visited on that occasion I had found that the trout, however small, could always be attracted in adequate numbers by a large salmon fly cast or trailed anyhow, while fine tackle and trout-flies properly so-called had proved not merely superfluous but comparatively ineffective. It was natural to suppose that in untravelled Labrador the fish would be at least equally unsophisticated. We had not to wait long, however, before discovering that our conclusions had been erroneous.

The *Harmony*, before depositing us at our starting point at Nain, called for a couple of days or so at the more southern Mission station of Hopedale. To pass the time Prichard and I determined to try our luck in some lakes in the neighbourhood where trout of no great size were said to exist in considerable numbers. The first day was most disappointing. Trout were there —we could see them; but to heavy tackle and large flies they proved altogether unresponsive. Fortunately we had found out our mistake in time and took immediate steps to supplement our deficiencies. Some fine casts and small flies were generously placed at our disposal by Mr. E. A. Payne, the storekeeper of the

Moravian Mission at Hopedale: and we were also fortunate enough to meet an American sportsman, Mr. Inman, who had been deposited from a friend's yacht to await the arrival of the first mail-boat in order to return to his own country. This gentleman also ransacked his supplies and furnished us with some small Parmachenee Belles, and other suitable flies. With our amended equipment we set out on the following day and met with quite satisfactory sport.

We were destined, however, to further disappointment during the early stages of our expedition up the Fraser River.

The state of the nets in Nain Bay showed that the sea trout were up at the head of it on our arrival in mid-July, and a camp of trout-netters under the direction of our Eskimo friend Filipus Hunter, was already installed at the mouth of the river as we approached it in our trap boat. All this promised sport, although places suitable for rod fishing from the bank were not numerous in the lower reaches, that is to say, east of the head of the big lake. This part of the river consists, as has been already described, of a chain of lakes and rapids all materially affected by the state of the tide; and no doubt within comparatively recent geological times, the sea water of Nunaingoak Bay ran in one unbroken fjord some thirty miles further than it does at present.

Yet, though my experience of the effect of tides on such a river as the Add in Argyllshire led me to expect no sport while the tide was flowing, I did cast perseveringly, but cast in vain.

On arrival at the head of the great lake, however, we met with our first genuine disappointment. Up

from this point the river resembles an ideal sea-trout and even salmon stream, in the bends of which are many rocky pools, reminding one of some of the best stretches of the Sundal in Norway. Into those clear green depths, however, we gazed in vain for a sight of a fish, and, wherever we halted, not only sight but faith was tested, for I visited every likely spot in the neighbourhood and fished it carefully and repeatedly. But, except for an occasional rise from a fingerling brook trout, whose efforts to impale himself on a hook designed for his betters were unavailing, there was no result, no encouragement whatever, and our diet of bacon remained unmitigated except for the almost negligible sustenance provided by an occasional squirrel.

The fact, as we subsequently ascertained, was that the sea trout were not "up" yet. On our return in September down the same stretch of river, many good sea trout were seen; and though our party could not stop to fish for them, I have no doubt that good sport could have been obtained—and, indeed, two of us discovered on the bank one fish so recently dead that it provided an appetising luncheon.

At the head of the lake when we returned there, an incredible number of sea trout were plainly visible on a sandy shallow, and there at least both Prichard and myself had a brief spell of excellent sport with spoon and fly.

Still later in the year—about the middle of October—when camped lower down about a mile from the bay, I saw sea trout crowded in a small tributary channel into which they had been enticed by an exceptionally high tide. There they lay trapped, covering the bottom so thickly that it would have been a matter of no difficulty

culty to obtain any quantity with a net or a triangle. As to my actual course of procedure on the occasion in question, I will say nothing.

But all this is anticipating; and a succession of blank days rewarded all my perseverance on the way up-stream, till one day we passed in the canoes a pool where at last there was some sign of life. A quantity of large duns, resembling in size and general appearance the blue-winged olive, were coming down, and a number of trout—small brook trout, but still trout—were rising greedily at them. Time did not then permit of a halt, but to this spot on the following day I returned with a small trout rod and light tackle, and succeeded in catching a fair number, enough for a welcome meal. On my return, however, through the woods, I was careless enough to leave the reel—with the line wound up—attached to the rod, and at some point in my walk this must have worked loose, for on arrival at camp, I was horrified to find that it was gone. Fortunately there remained the reel belonging to my 18-foot salmon rod, but neither reel or line were properly adapted for use with the little trout rod, which appeared to be our most promising weapon. And from this time onward till we left the river, the sport was really negligible.

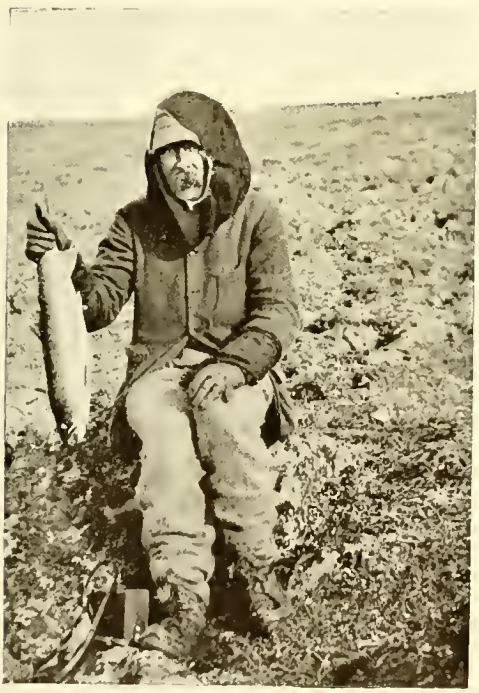
Before leaving the valley for the plateau above, we *cached* my big rod, lightness being a *sine qua non* for our projected journey with packs across the plateau. I had two alternatives for providing our trout rod with a line. The first, employed only when the fish anticipated were small, was to run through the rings a short length of the fine "backing" cut from my salmon line and attach one end to the small ring intended to receive the

hook when not in use. Casting with this makeshift was a difficulty, and in the event of a big fish unexpectedly taking hold, careful handling would be necessary to prevent a break. The more usual course which I adopted was to run the salmon line through the rings, attach one end to a button-hole of my coat, and coil the superfluous length of it as neatly as possible on the ground at my feet. This also was a cumbrous expedient, but it worked well enough in practice.

Sea trout had now, of course, been left behind; and our expectations were confined to the ordinary brook trout and the *namaycush*. This fish, the large lake trout of Labrador, resembles in shape the grilse or salmon, and in colour a pike, being covered with whitish spots on a grey-green ground. The flesh is a kind of buff colour, and most acceptable to the hungry traveller. We were not long before making its acquaintance.

On the evening of our final climb up Bear Valley, we had camped on the eastern edge of a lake of some size, the third in the little chain which had inveigled Porter into his magnificent and successful effort in portaging the canoe. In the morning, waking (as was my habit) earlier than my companions, I had taken a rod and endeavoured to catch some small trout which were engaged in laudable efforts to kill mosquitoes among the stony shallows of the margin. My efforts were unavailing, so I took the canoe, and trailing a salmon fly behind me pushed out into the deep. The *namaycush* is fortunately an unsophisticated fish, and I was soon fast in one of about 3 lbs. At this moment Prichard looked out, saw, and soon afterwards joined me, which got rid of the necessity of managing rod and canoe simultaneously, and thus reinforced we

Playing a Sea Trout.



A Namayush.

got two or three more by breakfast time. All these were comparatively small, from 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. so far as I can remember, which is nothing for a fish which is said to attain to thirty or forty pounds' weight, but quite sufficient to make an acceptable addition to a meal.

It was, perhaps, fortunate that neither here nor elsewhere did we meet with these legendary monsters, or, indeed, with a fish weighing much more than five pounds. We had with us no net or gaff to assist us at the final moment of the struggle, and without a reel, but with the primitive make-shifts which have been described, we might have had some difficulty even in getting to the stage where landing became the problem. My first experience, as I have said, was from a canoe; but on most, if not all subsequent occasions, the contest was carried on from the shore, where the difficulties to which I have alluded were ten-fold increased. Indeed, had the *namaycush* possessed the fighting qualities which its size warranted, I do not see how I could have hoped for success. The fish could have run out into the middle of the lake and pulled till something gave way—it was to be hoped nothing more serious than the hold or the fly. The shallow near the shore was more often than not a labyrinth of projecting stones, through which one had to tow the vanquished quarry before making sure of a breakfast. Fortunately the fish were amenable to treatment, but I only recollect one breaking me which dashed down the rapid outlet of a lake and escaped in the stream below. But many is the anxious moment that I can remember when every moment of the fight called for a judicious handling which made the capture sport indeed. I remember waking at the camp where the canoe was finally

abandoned and seeing a monster fish cruising up and down along the shallow margin of the lake below. A large Jock Scott hurled in his direction was met with a rush which left a wake like a torpedo boat, and he was securely hooked. Then came the tussle, when running up and down along the bank the angler had to humour the fish so long as he was inclined to hug the shore; and to suggest a perseverance in his amiable conduct in lieu of an uncontrollable dash into the centre of the lake. But all went well, and at last the tired monster was judiciously stranded, the rod dropped, and the fish fallen upon and thrown safely ashore before he had time to realise his position or the strained hold gave way. But perhaps the most exciting moments of all were on another morning at the same camp, when I had visited some likely pools in a small burn which ran into the southern extremity of the lake. Here I had not expected *namaycush*, or indeed anything but the smallest burn trout, and I had gone forth with no stronger line than a short length of backing attached to the rod in the manner already described. Certainly there were small burn trout there, and a little Parmachenee Belle wrought destruction among them—but there were also *namaycush*. Now in this case there was no line to be given, and the tackle was of the finest; moreover, our fine casts were none too numerous and a break would have been a serious catastrophe. The *namaycush*—for *namaycush*—were small, it is true; but I had hardly any hope of success, and the capture of three of them, under the circumstances, is certainly high among the angling exploits of which I am proudest. I recollect that in the case of one of them so hurried was my dash upon the prey as it came ashore that on grasping it I flung it

carelessly behind me into a small pool in the marsh, where, though in restricted quarters, it had depth enough to swim; and it was some time, exhausted as it was, before I could drive it about sufficiently for it to let me get hold of it again, but in the end all was well.

The best fishing camp of all was at that mosquito-haunted spot among the esker ridges which we distinguished with the name of Sandy Camp. It was pitched—if this expression can be used of a canvas sheet propped against a big boulder with stones—in an angle between a lake and its outlet, a fairly wide brook with some capital pools in it. In the brook were ordinary trout of quite a fair size—half-pounders and bigger—and in the lake, after a day or two, *namaycush* put in an appearance near the shore. I think they were probably attracted to the spot by the camp refuse thrown in there—bacon rinds and the offal of earlier victims of our rod and line. In this belief I am confirmed by a similar experience at our camp in the George Valley, by Slippery Brook as we called it, a small stream running down into Indian House Lake. There, when we first arrived, we caught nothing but small brook trout; but after we had camped there some time, and portions of two deer were lardered in its pools, I caught at least two good *namaycush* and rose others. Anyhow, be the reason what it may, there they were, and thence we extracted them.

The memory of this angling under adverse conditions will always be among the pleasantest of my recollections. I cannot hope to convey the thrill to others, who will, I fear, regard this chapter as dull and uninstructive. Certainly, if those who read it learn anything, it will be in the nature of avoiding our mistakes. Do not, when

walking in woods, keep the reel on the rod when the latter is taken down. Take plenty of fine tackle and small loch-trout size flies, especially that deadliest of all, the Parmachenee Belle. If you are merely out for sport, do not expect sea trout till near September at any great distance from the sea. For the *namaycush*, anything strong will do; spoons are exeellent, but a large salmon fly, Jock Scott, Wilkinson, what you will, is pretty certain to be successful. Finally I should say if you can manage it take a landing net, or better, because more portable, a small gaff. When sea-trout fishing in Norway, my friend, Mr. E. Lort Phillips, sometimes uses a very portable form consisting of a large cod-hook spliced to a stick. This can be carried with the hook stuck into one's cap or hat band where it is no weight, and out of the way. I should say it would have been admirable for an expedition like ours. As to other methods of getting fish for the pot, the late Leonidas Hubbard endeavoured to proeure a net, and his misfortunes have been attributed in some measure to his failure to obtain a satisfactory one. Mrs. Hubbard, following in his intended footsteps, did take a net, but I do not gather from her interesting volume that much good eame of it. A net that has been recently used is no light weight, to say nothing of the leads which form an integral part of all that I have ever seen. Moreover, the knowledge how and when profitably to set it is by no means so universal as that of fishing for unsophisticated trout with rod and line. I myself should never think it worth while to take such an addition to my load, even if the route were exclusively in a canoe with short portages. Hubbard's own experience shows that fish will rise until very late in the season, later than the

traveller ought to delay in the country, and I should imagine—though here I do not speak from personal experience—that when flies fail a few bait hooks either taken specially or improvised from flies would prove effective in luring the uneducated trout and *namaycush* of the Labrador.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR *versus* NORWAY.

A COMPARISON OF PLAYGROUNDS WEST AND EAST.

Before I started for Labrador I had two objects in view— I have already dealt with the first; the second was to examine very thoroughly the attractions of Newfoundland and Labrador from the point of view of the sportsman and pleasure-seeker in order that I might compare the sport to be obtained in these playgrounds of the West with that which one may expect in Norway. I was also determined to go into the question of the cost of such sport in the two continents of Europe and America.

Now, before I proceed, it would probably be as well if I were to mention such qualifications as I possess for this task and the amount of my experience and authority more or less to write upon the question, which, as I hope to show later, is one of great interest to both English and American sportsmen. I therefore give the following facts.

In 1903 I made a journey to Labrador, from where I caught the last steamer of the year, and landing at St. John's, Newfoundland, enjoyed some magnificent sport after caribou in the early snow. In 1904 I again visited Newfoundland, and with Captain E. G. Wynyard,

D.S.O., penetrated into hunting grounds which had never before been visited by white men. In 1905 I took a large elk-shooting in Norway. In 1906 I was again in Newfoundland. In 1908 I went once more to Norway, and finally, in 1910, made, with my companions, the expedition of which I have told the story in these pages.

It will be seen, therefore, that at any rate I am not writing without considerable experience of Norway, Newfoundland and Labrador.

First of all with regard to Labrador: In the old days the sport there must have been truly magnificent, as witness the following written by Captain Cartwright about the year 1775:

> "Salmon innumerable were leaping in the air, and a great concourse of white bears were diving after them. Others were walking along shore, and others were going in and out of the woods."

It was on this occasion that the gallant Captain broke his ramrod and had to fly into the woods until he could load his rifle once more.

To-day it is only in the north of Labrador that polar or, as they call them locally, "water bears" are at all numerous. Black bears, however, are very common.

Of the caribou I have already written at length; other game animals of Labrador are but infrequently met with by the hunter; the red or Barren Ground bear is probably extinct in *explored* Labrador; and the lynx and wolf, though common enough, rarely fall to the bullet.

The gun-shooting in Labrador is often capital, willow-grouse, ptarmigan, geese, black-ducks, and many other

species existing in fair numbers. I think, with a good dog, one could bag from ten to fifteen brace of willow-grouse in the many places where these birds abound. The wild fowling is less satisfactory, thanks to the senseless and criminal slaughter of nesting birds in the bad old days of the "Eggers."

The fishing on the Labrador is excellent. The salmon, unlike those of Alaska, take the fly well and freely, and in spite of netting—an evil (thanks to the vigorous measures of Sir Edward Morris' government) now on the decrease. At the head of Byron's Bay the American party of Mr. Paul Rainey had grand sport in 1909, and there are many fine rivers. In some years the salmon are much earlier than others. At the right season every stream in Labrador is full of trout, and the sea-trout fishing late in the year is magnificent. In early September we had no difficulty in taking all the sea-trout we wanted.

So much, then, for the merits of the Labrador; now for her drawbacks. Beyond the difficulties of communication—difficulties already much reduced during the last year or two—the main drawback is the plague of mosquitoes; but, save on the great central plateau, they are no worse than one meets with on the Quebec rivers, or than those of northern Norway and Lapland. On the plateau the mosquitoes are truly past endurance, but there is nothing to attract sportsmen to that bleak place.

About August the 25th the mosquitoes and blackflies become very subdued, and are no longer to be reckoned even a nuisance. Indeed, the end of August and the whole of September are the ideal times for the gunner in Labrador.

Cut off from the World.

The keen sportsman who goes there will thoroughly enjoy himself. He can then take both trout and sea-trout, track deer and bear in the first snow, and—if he so wishes—shoot willow-grouse rising from the low birch and alder. Above all, he will enjoy the glorious northern fall. Fortunate, indeed, is he who can spend his holiday on the Labrador, but to all, except the very keen, I say: Do not go. Labrador has great prizes to offer to the fortunate; but the risk of total failure, for the gunner, is great. For the fisherman the country is still largely a *terra incognita*, but she has many a virgin river waiting for the angler, and for him, at least, sport is certain.

And now to turn to Newfoundland. All that is good of the Labrador is true of Newfoundland also, and far more besides. Indeed, in a fairly wide experience I have never enjoyed any sport and life so greatly as I have my three autumns spent among the woods and barrens of Britain's oldest colony.

The list of big-game obtainable in Newfoundland is Woodland caribou (the finest in the world), black bear and lynx. Some years ago a herd of moose were introdueed, and the season for these is to open in 1912, but what progress the great deer have made I do not know, though I have my fears! Certainly their presence would add greatly to the charm of the Terranovan wilderness.

But to the hunter a visit to Newfoundland means the pursuit of caribou. Over her barrens and marshes, through her woods, roam vast herds of these magnifieent ereatures, which, since the railway bisected the eountry, have changed their habits and remain in districts more remote, yet easily attainable by a canoe voyage up some lovely river. Leaving the train of the Reid

Company at one of twenty stations, the hunter and his guides can in a day, even in an hour, lose all trace of civilisation and, journeying on, come in due time into the sanctuary of the deer. There he can camp and, day after day, hunt such stags as he has heretofore seen only in dreams.

His license (which costs 50 dollars) allows him to shoot three, but if he be a real sportsman-naturalist—and to such alone do I address myself—that limitation will not cause him either annoyance or regret, for such a man cares not to press trigger save at the head of heads, and surely it is time in these latter days that we should be willing and glad to play a more subtle and a finer game than our ancestors, and to play that game within rules and limitations.

Modern small-bore rifles, telescope sights (if he considers the last fair) have given the hunter a monstrous advantage over the hunted, and although I have never judged a sport—as many seem to do—according to the ratio of physical exertion it requires, yet it must be recognised that to kill big-game is sometimes no longer the strenuous business it once was. Still, to obtain a magnificent head is quite difficult enough. Speaking personally—and I fear that in this chapter I must draw on my own experience or my remarks will be of no value—I would sooner shoot one caribou of fifty points than twenty smaller beasts, and, what is more, I would derive more pleasure from so doing. Again and again, in the glorious Newfoundland air, the hunter may stalk his five or more stags a day, and continue to do so for weeks before he sees the antlers which satisfy him, but he will enjoy each stalk as much as if it had ended in a kill, or, if he does not, let him stay at home and

use a bigger weapon at less noble game. In 1903, in Central Newfoundland, I saw 121 stags between October 23rd and November 5th, and there is no reason why any hunter who goes far enough from the beaten track and allows himself time should not do the same to-day. Of these stags I stalked over forty to within range, and it was not always the stalk which ended in a shot that was the most enjoyable.

So much then for caribou hunting in Newfoundland. Let us compare the sport I enjoyed there in 1903 with that I obtained in Norway in 1905.

In that year I rented in the Namdalen district of Norway, the right to shoot eighteen elk, and, working really hard for twenty-one days, saw either four or five bulls—whether four or five I cannot say, as of one I got but a glimpse. I killed three and enjoyed the hunting, but to my mind the creeping through the woods after my hunter and his hound did not compare with the spying of great stags upon the Barrens a mile away or more, and the careful and exciting approach which almost invariably followed.

And now let us examine the respective expenses of a shooting-season in Norway and in Newfoundland. In this matter I will give my own figures. The season's shooting in Norway cost me a little over £160, of which the greater portion was spent in the hire of eighteen elk-rights, whereas a longer time spent in Newfoundland cost just over £100. Of course in giving these figures, I cannot too strongly insist on the fact that the price I paid for the eighteen elk-rights was an unusually low one—I have seen them advertised in London at treble the sum for which I secured them on the spot—and also that of the eighteen rights ten were so poor that I saw

no elk at all on them, while on four others I saw no bull elk. The cost of good rights is from £7 10s. to £15 each, so, as it may be thought that my case was exceptional, I may state that the hunters in that district (an excellent one) paying between them about £350, killed in all twelve bull elk, of which seven carried warrantable heads.

I do not want, however, to labour my point in regard to elk, but would ask the reader to compare the cost of reindeer shooting in Norway and in Newfoundland, for the caribou, as every one knows, is merely the new-world form of the reindeer.

The rents of private reindeer shootings vary and the good grounds are both few and far between. Consequently the prices are such as to put them beyond the scope of this comparison ; but by the payment of a little over £11 to Government the foreigner may enter into competition with the local gunners—to whom the chase is free—upon certain public lands. This payment gives him the right to shoot three reindeer during the open season from September 1st to 14th, but the number of peasant meat-hunters and the comparatively small area of the ground to be hunted make any comparison between this and Newfoundland sport absurd, although the man who kills a good reindeer in Norway outwits one of the cleverest and shyest animals of the chase, and this is more than ever true since the introduction of new laws forbidding the use of small-bore and magazine rifles.

Now as to the fishermen. In Norway rents upon the famous salmon rivers are high, and even for the rivers of Arctic Lapland, Iceland and Finland a large price must be paid, and the days of Sir Hyde Parker, pioneer of Scandinavian waters, when a little money went a long way, are gone never to return.

In Newfoundland and Labrador all the fishing is free. Instead of the fishing-lodge of wood such as obtains in Norway, the angler must camp, and, though the mosquitoes and black-flies are a great drawback, they are certainly not more so than upon the rivers of far Northern Europe. An excellent fishing trip can be made to Newfoundland for £70, while similar sport could not be enjoyed in Norway for £200.

But the man who holds a brief for Norway will say "Yes, but how long does it take to get to your ground?" The answer is "very little longer than the time occupied in attaining the rivers of Northern Europe."

The angler may start from London on Saturday, and upon the Tuesday week following may be playing his fish in the centre of Newfoundland, and this although at present the steamers are comparatively slow. St. John's, the capital of Newfoundland, is only 1640 miles from Ireland, and could, with fast ships, be brought within four and a half days of England. Such ships would inevitably follow a large tourist traffic, and if any of the plans at present mooted materialise, Newfoundland will be recognised and enjoyed as the glorious sporting field and playing ground which it is.

In the United States, whose great cities are within easy reach by comfortable steamers of Newfoundland, the attractions of that country are beginning to be widely realised, and she is entering into rivalry with Maine and New Brunswick as the "Sanatorium of the West."

It may be asked whether the sporting possibilities of a comparatively small island little larger than Ireland will be equal to providing good sport for many. As far as the reply is concerned, the answer to that question lies in the geography of the island. All the interior is

covered with woods interseeted by marshes and barrens, thus forming a sanetuary for the deer where they can breed and wander in peaee. As to their continuance, take the case of the Norwegian elk as a parallel.

Fifty years ago elk were few and far between in Norway. The peasant farmers had nearly exterminated them when the Government suddenly awoke, or were awakened by the influx of British sportsmen, to the faet that in her forests and her rivers Norway possessed a great source of national wealth. Good game laws were eonsequently passed, and, what is more important, were enforced, with the result that the stock of elk increased to an amazing extent.

In Newfoundland the number of caribou have been estimated by various authorities at figures varying between 200,000 and half a million, and, as there are now few wolves, the deer have no foe save man. And it is not the sportsmen and the Indians who will eause any serious diminution in their numbers.

On the other hand the development of the pulp industry is now yearly taking large camps of men deeper and deeper into the interior, so that the earibou are being driven baek; but this is a state of affairs with whieh the Government is certain to deal in good time, yet the sooner the vast potentialities of Newfoundland as a sporting field are recognised, the better for its salmon and its deer. In their continued existenee Newfoundland has a wonderful asset. Those who wish to learn more of the subjeet, and who desire to visit the Colony should send for a copy of the Newfoundland Guide-book, edited by D. W. Prowse, now issued by the Government; and for the pamphlets published by the Reid Company, of St. John's. These publica-

tions are entirely reliable, and a letter to the Reid Company, St. John's, will elicit every kind of information.

Mr. Henry Blair, of St. John's, is an agent who has engaged guides and arranged shooting and fishing trips for many well-known sportsmen, and anyone who puts himself into his capable hands may be sure of good treatment.

But beyond Newfoundland lies Labrador, and to Labrador we must once more return. For this country nothing more fortunate can be imagined than that it should be thoroughly explored. At present vast tracts remain utterly unknown. From the eastern coast thousands of great fjords run up into the land, and an explorer, choosing almost any one of these, can be upon virgin ground when he first lands. At the heads of a few of these bays a settler and his family may be found, but for the most part they are untenanted. Sometimes by one of these great water-ways or "submerged valleys" the traveller can penetrate (as we did) fifty or more miles inland. Then, if he is north of 55° lat. when he climbs from the valley, he will find himself upon the edge of a huge and bare tableland dotted with innumerable sheets of water; if he be south of that line he will enter upon a medley of woods and marshes stretching far into the interior to the very banks of the George River itself. West of the George, and between that and the Whale River, lies an area of great size and absolutely unexplored. Over this ground it is extremely improbable that, except in short excursions from the George, even the Indians have travelled. Seen from the high land on the east bank of the George, it presents the aspect of a great series of ridges rolling up to the height of land between the twin rivers of the Barrens.

But there is a journey of journeys to be accomplished. This is the crossing of Labrador in the Ungava district from West to East, from (say) the Hudson's Bay post at Fort George, to Nain on the Atlantic coast. The distance is a little over 700 miles as the crow flies, but in all probability it would lengthen out in actual travel to twice that number, although a start might be made from the West by either the Great Whale or the Big River, if either is navigable. The hardy explorers who make such an attempt must expect to find themselves at a comparatively early date of their venture faced with an endless series of portages. Much food therefore could not be taken and the expedition would resolve itself into a prolonged attempt to live upon the natural resources of one of the most barren countries in the world. Still the men who could succeed in such a journey would have the satisfaction of performing a feat almost unparalleled in the history of exploration, the nearest approach to it being the daring Tasker journey to which I have already referred.

It is of course possible that there may be parts of the great plateau of Central Labrador which are not so devoid of life and game as those we passed over, where had it not been for the few stragglers left behind by the great caribou migration, we should have fared badly. In the river valleys, which a party travelling from West to East must make use of, there would be a good chance of killing bears. Again, somewhere upon their long trek they might meet the caribou herds. But such a meeting and such good fortune would lie upon the lap of the gods, and it is certain that hundreds of miles might provide only probabilities of ptarmigan and fish. And when travellers

have to start late and camp early in order to catch (if they can) their breakfasts and their suppers, the pace of travel must decrease. Still there is the journey to be attempted, but those who set out upon it will be fortunate if they reach the East Coast. That is, provided the attempt is made in summer. In winter a party proceeding on the definite lines of Polar exploration would probably win through, but at such a season the snow would cover the natural features of the landscape, and three parts of the scientific value of the journey would be lacking.

Lately a good deal of interest has been aroused in the timber possibilities of the Labrador. In the southern localities these may, no doubt, be great, for although the growth is slow, the spruce is peculiarly adapted for the manufacture of pulp. North of Hopedale, however great care should be exercised by intending investors, as timber exists only in the river valleys, and though at one spot trees may be found in abundance, yet less than half-a-mile away there may be none at all. North of Nain only the rivers are bordered with timber, the rest of the country being barren of all save creeping birch and alder.

I make these remarks because I can imagine nothing more fatal to the true interests of Labrador than an indiscriminate boom in her natural resources. She may have wealth, but it needs careful handling, and the failure of a few companies to realise expectations would do the country a vast amount of permanent harm, and arrest her development for a century perhaps.

And now a few final words. When first I visited Labrador in 1903 I started from England on the 23rd of August, and eventually landed at a cod-fishing station called Fanny's Harbour, off the Labrador coast, on

September 19th. There I purchased a boat, and on September 21st reached the mainland—altogether a weary journey of 29 days. On my return I had to voyage some sixty miles down the coast in an open boat in order to catch the last steamer.

But now all this is changed. The Reid Company —it seems impossible to write of either Newfoundland or Labrador without mention of them—have put on a steamer called the *Invermore*, which every eight or ten days goes up the Labrador coast from St. John's as far as 55° north lat. This boat, before she was acquired by the Company, was a crack passenger steamer running to Ireland, so that now the traveller and the tourist can voyage up the Labrador coast with much comfort, and from the decks of a well-found steamer watch the Northern Lights waving and flickering over great and desolate spaces which as yet man has not trodden.

THE END.

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